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THE MAGAZINE THAT RIPS THE LID OFF PRO WRESTLING

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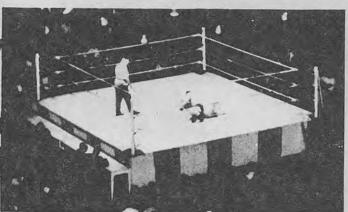
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SINCERELY YOURS

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FINALLY, THE CHAMPS

I'm overjoyed that The Midnight Express won the NWA World tag team belts from Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson. Wait, don't get me wrong—I don't love the Midnights. I don't even like them.

I just hate Tully and Arn.

That's right, hate. My hatred grew and grew the more I watched matches involving The Four Horsemen. They are sleazy, rulebreaking scum. There are no other words to describe them. They attacked people outside the ring (outside the arena, too), they double-and triple-teamed opponents, and they often used foreign objects provided to them by their evil manager, J.J. Dillon.

Now that The Midnight Express has had a taste of being fan favorites, my guess is they'll remain on the good side. I'm ready to like them, but I need proof that they'll continue to fight for what is right. I hope they do.

RICHARD SIMON Dobbs Ferry, NY

TOO HARSH, STU

Although I appreciate Stu Saks' candor and intelligence, I feel I must criticize him for his incredibly harsh attack on Ronnie Garvin in your November 1988 issue ("Editor's Notebook"). Saks trashed Garvin's career solely because of his recent turn against Dusty Rhodes.

Look at the other side of the tale,

Saks. What if a hated rulebreaker suddenly turned good? Would you criticize him as harshly for betraying his beliefs? No, you'd merely say something like, "Well, he finally saw the light."

Garvin was good for a long time, battling the most hated wrestlers in the business. He wasn't good merely because, as Saks said, "it served his purposes." He was good because he wanted to fight the bad guys of wrestling. And then, when it appeared that the so-called good guys were really using him, he turned against them. I applaud his ability to break free of people-users like his brother Jimmy and Dusty Rhodes

So, while Saks is correct that Ronnie betrayed our trust, I feel good for him that he's broken free. Don't wish him injury, Stu. Just wish him luck.

AMANDA NELLIGAN Los Angeles

IDOLMANIA LIVES!

I would like to bring to the attention of the editors of this fine magazine that Austin Idol is one of the hottest stars in wrestling today.

Idol is currently involved in a feud with "Hot Stuff" Eddie Gilbert. Recently, Idol had Jerry Lawler's AWA World title in his grasp, but Gilbert's interference prevented the title change.

This feud is reaching epic proportions in the Continental area. "The Universal Heartthrob" is an overwhelming favorite of the fans.

As a longtime fan and reader of your fine magazine, I am asking that you give Austin a little more coverage.



Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson, both hated by reader Richard Simon, left The Four Horsemen for the WWF after losing the NWA World tag team title to The Midnight Express.



Austin Idol covers Jerry Lawler. Keith Tribbett would like to see more stories on Idol, "The Universal Heartthrob." On at least one occasion, Idol nearly beat Lawler for the AWA title.

Maybe you could do a "Capsule Profile" on him soon, or an in-depth feature on the Gilbert-Idol feud. Remember, Austin is the only man ever to win a hair vs. hair bout against Jerry Lawler!

It's time for everyone to realize what a great wrestler Austin Idol truly is. Keep up the good work, Austin.

KEITH TRIBBETT Charleston, SC

MORE BABY PICTURES

In the October 1988 issue of *Inside Wrestling*, you ran an incredibly cute photo of Hulk Hogan as a baby ("Blast From The Past"). I may not



Hulk Hogan as a baby. Sandy Robinson would like to see baby pictures of other mat stars.

be a Hulkamaniac or anything, but I know a beautiful baby picture when I see one.

In the future, could you put more baby pictures in your magazine? Maybe you could even have a special baby picture section.

> SANDY ROBINSON Philadelphia

A BIRD FOREVER

Your amazing article on the Freebirds ("Three Views, But All Agree: The Freebird Feud Must End!" written by Michael Hayes, Terry Gordy, and Buddy Roberts, November 1988) confirmed what I had long suspected.

First of all, let me congratulate you for that fine piece of journalism. Getting all three 'Birds together to write their own side of the story was a great idea.

In the end, however, I am forced to side with Buddy Roberts. He's 100 percent correct when he describes the history of the Freebirds as one long quest to rid wrestling of the Von Erichs. Buddy's right: it was Michael Hayes who turned away from the Freebirds, not the other way around. Hadn't all the 'Birds sworn to destroy the Von Erichs before allowing themselves to be destroyed? Well, Michael abandoned his pledge and invited this tragedy.

That's not putting down Michael, either. His section of the article made several good points as well. Indeed, why couldn't Buddy Roberts accept Hayes' new friendships? Hayes still has the heart of the Freebirds, even though he's purged himself of their venomous spleen.

After reading your article, I have every reason to believe that the Free-birds will one day be back together. And that's a day I'm *really* looking forward to.

NANCY COATS Oklahoma City



Michael Hayes laces into Buddy Roberts. Nancy Coats believes that someday the three original Freebirds will reunite, but it doesn't seem likely.

TEACHER, TEACHER

I want to thank *Inside Wrestling* for the excellent cover story involving Barry Windham and Dusty Rhodes in the November 1988 issue ("Dusty Rhodes vs. Barry Windham: The Night the Teacher Learned A Lesson").

I find Windham's defection to the Horsemen one of the most tragic incidents in wrestling over the past five years. Windham was long a beacon of honesty and integrity in the sport. He and Dusty were the closest of friends, and the two of them had cleaned up the Florida area of all kinds of rule-breakers in the early- and mid-'80s.

Then he was lured by The Four Horsemen, J.J. Dillon, and the almighty dollar, and he threw away ev-

(Continued on page 48)

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Saks Editor-in-Chief

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Tough times ahead for Ric Flair. Not only will he have to continue to face the formidable challenges of the two hottest young stars in the sport-Lex Luger and Sting-but there are other big-name wrestlers itching for the opportunity to get at the champion now that he has been left vulnerable by the apparent disintegration of The Four Horsemen.

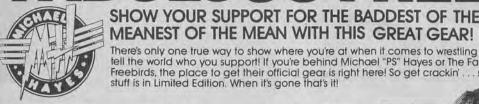
Flair is in serious trouble. The feeling here is that if the Horsemen can't regroup-and I doubt they can-Flair will lose his belt within a matter of months. His reliance on the protection of his Horsemen partners, while assuring his title reign to this point, will hurt him in the long run. His skills have atrophied, and while he still maintains a strenuous workout regimen, he has become mentally lazy.

He's in trouble and, worst of all, he's too cocky to realize it. But others have. Bam Bam Bigelow has signed with the NWA and claims to be seeking all belts. The guess here is that he'd settle for one-if it's the right one. Bigelow obviously has the talent to beat any man alive. His problem has been one of commitment. It will be up to his manager, Oliver Humperdink, to keep his head straight.

Bigelow could do the job, but there is an even bigger star rumored to be headed to the NWA. Rick Steamboat, who announced his retirement after WrestleMania IV, is said to be in negotiations with NWA President Jim Crockett. If Steamboat is to be coaxed out of retirement, it will not be for anything less than a series of shots at the NWA World title. Steamboat and Flair have engaged in a number of classic matches and each was a thriller. Steamboat is far better off for his stay in the WWF, and unless Flair were fully prepared, I'd give 'The Dragon' an edge.

Six months. No longer. Among Sting, Luger, Bigelow, and Steamboat, one of of these men is going to put Flair down.

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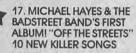
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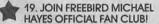


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Behind the Dressing Room Door

by David Rosenbaum EVERYTHING HAS A good side and a bad side, especially pro wrestling. Of course, because of the unusual and explosive nature of wrestling, the sport probably has more than its share of items on both sides.

So, after nearly three years as a wrestling journalist, these are the 20 things I like best about professional wrestling (in no particular order):

- 1. The Honky Tonk Man.
- 2. WWF Prime Time Wrestling on the USA Network. Gorilla Monsoon, Bobby Heenan, the on-location spots, and the interviews. Not the matches, which usually stink.
- 3. Missy Hyatt.
- 4. Jesse Ventura's commentary.
- 5. Jim Cornette's interviews.
- That there'll be a second Survivor Series. It's November 26 in Richfield, Ohio, and on pay-per-view TV.
- 7. That I won't have to attend another Bunkhouse Stampede final at the Nassau Colseum. Once was enough.
- 8. The WWF's press luncheons.
- 9. Magnificent Mimi.
- **10.** Dusty Rhodes' Mellow Yellow commercials.
- 11. King Kong Bundy's computer commercials (I forgot what company they're for; I just like the commercials).
- **12.** Paul E. Dangerously's interviews. This guy *will* be a superstar before long.
- 13. CWA announcer Lance Russell.
- 14. The crowd reaction, especially at Madison Square Garden, when Hulk Hogan makes his ring entrance. I hate Hogan (see the second list comprising the second half of this column), but if I

(Continued on page 52)

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STING IS SLATED for a threeweek tour of Japan sometime around the end of the year. If all goes well, he will return having undergone an amazing transformation: from a blindingly bright championship prospect into one of the very best wrestlers the sport has ever seen.

"I'm going to be touring Japan for All-Japan Pro Wrestling," Sting told me, "and I'm approaching this tour with a lot of mixed feelings and a lot of goals."

Those goals, Sting explained, are threefold:

• Sting would like to establish himself as a major star in the island nation; this is his first tour of Japan, and he's anxious to make a good first impression.

"Japanese wrestling fans are amazing, from what I've heard," Sting said. "I don't mean to downgrade Ameri-



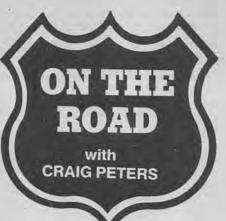
Sting

can fans, because the fans have always been great to me, and I love them dearly. But in Japan, wrestling has a different national prominence than it does here in the States. It's more like, say, baseball or football. Take the popularity of wrestling in the U.S. and multiply it by about 10 or 20, and that's what you have in Japan.

"Also, the Japanese fans are very discriminating," Sting continued. "They'll boo a bad wrestler right off the island! It's a tough group of fans to win over. If I can make a good impression on them, it will be very satisfying to me on a personal level. I think—I hope!—I've got the kind of personality and charisma that can transcend any language barrier. I guess I'll find out pretty quickly whether I'm right or wrong!"

• Sting would like to receive some title shots against men like All-Japan International champion Jumbo Tsuruta, and All-Japan United National champion Stan Hansen.

"I'm not going over there with unreasonable expectations," Sting said. "It's like entering a brand-new federation; I have to establish myself first and climb up that ladder of contention. So I'm not looking for a nightly series of bouts against Tsuruta, for example. But on the other hand, I think I'm good enough that I ought to be able to get one or two title shots. After all, I've battled [NWA World champion Ric] Flair to the limit on plenty of occasions—that's got to count for something. I hope that the All-Japan officials will look at my record in that respect and take that into account when considering title matchups during my tour there."



 Sting would like to test and expand his own repertoire of skills against a brand-new crop of opponents.

"There's a different emphasis in Japan than there is in the States. There's more of a premium placed on aerial skills, on perpetual motion, on multifaceted wrestling. In the States, it's more a case of take a style, stick with it, and build on that one style. So you

have a guy like Flair, a great all-

around wrestler, who goes with a very defensive style of wrestling—often aided by outside interference, I might add. But he's chosen his style, and he's sticking with it. And it's been successful for him, that's something you simply can't deny.

"But in picking that style," Sting continued, "it forces Flair's opponents to narrow their own styles. They wind up trying to hammer, hammer, hammer down Flair with their own two or three special moves. When they improve on those moves, Flair improves on his defenses, then they try to improve those moves to counter those defenses, and so on through the cycle. It's like an electric drill: keep drilling constantly, and sooner or later you're going to break through to the other side.

"It makes sense, in a way, but the Japanese have a different philosophy," Sting explained. "I think it's more of a question where, instead of doing one thing to perfection, one tries do many things very, very well. So you're not attacking a man with incredible strength and power on just one front, you're trying to wear him down in two or three—or six or seven—different ways. If aerial doesn't work, go to the mat with pure science; shift to a brawl if you have to; diversify the attack. If you've ever read any military history, you'd know that a lot of this kind of difference in strategy and approach is similar to what you find when you analyze military battle strategies. It's not a question of a right or wrong approach, it's simply a different approach."

And that's what's going to transform Sting into one of the greatest the sport has ever seen: his willingness to test different ideas and, if they're proven successful, assimilate them into his own personal style. There's no better place in the wrestling world for a young man with all the tools of greatness at his disposal than Japan. A tour there means new challenges, new opponents, new experiences—and Sting is the kind of man who is eager to learn from those experiences. That's all too rare in the sport today.

"I'm not afraid of losing," Sting said. "The only thing I'm afraid of is never having the chance to win. Just give me the chance, though, and I'll take care of the rest."

Words of wisdom spoken by the voice of greatness.



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NAMES MAKI

THE AWA HAS *finally* made its big announcement! SuperClash III, a giant card featuring top stars from the AWA, the CWA, and World Class, will be broadcast live via pay-per-view TV on December 13 from the UIC Pavilion in Chicago.

The main event will pit AWA World champion **Jerry Lawler** against World Class titlist **Kerry Von Erich** in a title unification match that "must end with



VON ERICH VS. LAWLER

a decisive winner," according to AWA President **Stanley Blackburn**.

"Our rivalry has turned into a war," Von Erich said concerning his matches with Lawler (see story on page 42). "This match is set up the way it should be—when it's over, one of us will hold both titles. May the best man win."

In other scheduled matches, Sgt. Slaughter will take on Col. DeBeers in a boot camp match, Manny Fernandez will meet Wahoo McDaniel in an Indian strap match, and Madusa Miceli will defend her AWA women's title. Ronnie Garvin will try

to defend his newly won AWA TV title from former champion *Greg Gagne*.

Garvin used his wiles to beat Gagne for the TV belt September 17 in Nashville, Tennessee. Garvin pretended to sprain his ankle, and when Gagne stopped to inspect the "injury," Garvin slugged Gagne with a foreign object.

"I can't believe the son of **Verne Gagne** fell for such an old trick!"
laughed Garvin after winning the belt.
"He'll get his rematch, but he'll lose because this belt is in good hands—hands of stone, that is!"

Speaking of supercards, the NWA will precede its annual Starrcade spectacular with a week of special events. "Battlestar '88—The Road To Starrcade" will begin November 23 in Baltimore, and will feature NWA World tag team champions **The Midnight Express** taking on **The Road Warriors**.

Speaking of the Midnights, Paul E.

Dangerously, manager of The
"Original" Midnight Express—
Randy Rose and Dennis Con-



PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY

drey—has issued a challenge to Jim Cornette! "We deserve a shot at the NWA title," screamed Dangerously. "I know who the real Express is. Let's see if Cornette feels the same way!"

The World Wrestling Council Universal title, left vacant when former champion *Hercules Ayala* was stripped for hitting the wife of *Carlos Colon* during an awards banquet, is up for grabs in a tournament that was scheduled to



CARLOS COLON

begin October 15. Included in the tournament are Colon, *Chris Adams*, *Abdullah the Butcher*, *TNT*, *Ron Garvin*, *The Iron Sheik*, and *Eddie Gilbert*. Ayala has been banned from the WWC and has not been allowed to participate. The tourney will conclude on December 17.

Congratulations to **Nikita Koloff** and his new bride, **Mandy**, who were married on September 20 . . . The NWF title was held up following a match between champion **D.C. Drake** and **Jules Strongbow** . . . **Eddie Gilbert** left the Continental area following a contractual dispute with CWF

N' NEWS

Bill Apter reporting...



EDDIE GILBERT

officials **David Woods** and **Ron West**. Also leaving with Gilbert is his wife, **Missy Hyatt**, and manager **Paul E. Dangerously**.

Several established wrestling stars are going through some drastic changes. Former NWA World tag team champions Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson will have a totally new image in the WWF. The duo will now be known as The Brainbusters. Bobby Heenan has been mentioned as a probable manager . . . Speaking of the Andersons, Agent Steele has unmasked, revealing himself to be Brad Anderson, son of the legendary Gene Anderson. Brad will be competing in the Stampede area . . . One Man Gang is now known as Akeem in the WWF . . . Heenan, who recently signed Terry Taylor to a contract, is now refering to the former Texas champion as The Little Red Rooster.

Fatu and **Samu**, **The Samoan Swat Team**, regained the World Class tag team title from **Steve Cox** and **Michael Hayes** September 19 in Memphis—after losing the belts to the popular team only three days earlier. When Fatu pinned Hayes, Hayes had

his foot draped over the ropes, but the referee failed to see it. The results of this match have only increased the friction between the former Freebird mates.

"We didn't give Hayes and Cox a long time to celebrate, did we?" claims SST manager **Buddy Roberts**. "When they beat us it was a fluke, but all that matters is that the awesome SST is back on top, right where we should be."

September was a big month for the Guerrero brothers! **Peter Maivia Jr.** and **Mando Guerrero**, managed by Japanese star **Prof. Toru Tanaka**, won the ACCW tag team championshp from **The Lords of Discipline** on September 27. On the same card, **Chavo Guerrero** won the All-California Championship Wrestling title from **"Wildman" Jack Armstrong**. The youngest Guerrero brother, **Hector**, is head coach at The School of Perpetual Motion, a new gymnastics center in Maryville, Tennessee.

Tag team news: **Jerry Stubbs** and **Tony Anthony** are the new CWF tag



TONY ANTHONY



CHRIS BENOIT

team champions. They were awarded the belts when **Shane Douglas**, who held the title with **Humongous**, left the federation . . . **The Terminator** and former Sheepherder flagbearer **Johnny Ace** won the Florida Championship Wrestling tag team title from **Mike Graham** and **Steve Keirn** September 27 in Tampa . . . **Chris Benoit** and **Lance Idol** are hot on the heels of Stampede tag team champions **The Cuban Commandos** . . . **David Sammartino** is teaming with **The Destroyer** in the All-Japan federation.

On a sad note, veteran promoter and wrestler **Leroy McGuirk** died on September 9 at the age of 78. McGuirk was the world junior heavyweight champion from 1939 to 1950, one of the longest title reigns in the history of the sport. Blinded after a 1950 auto accident, he nevertheless continued to promote wrestling cards in Oklahoma until the mid-'70s. A true legend, he will be sorely missed.

That's all for now, fans! See you at the matches! $\hfill\Box$

By Eddie Ellner

The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Eddie Ellner alone, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.]

HE CONTEST TO name the greatest moment in wrestling history is over. The tremendous response left me deeply humbled and saddened. The letters were received, read, and appreciated. overwhelmingly intelligent, which indicates to me that smart fans sen at random and the winning won't write unless there's some booty on the line. Perhaps I should run a contest every month. (Romeyn: if you want your prizes,

to select a winner. I briefly consid- of this column and enclose your ered putting the letters up to a address!) committee vote of fellow editors, but quickly realized they pos- Bedford, Ohio, writes: The greatsessed neither the depth nor the est moment in wrestling history soul to do my readers justice. I was when The Iron Sheik defeat-

chose a winner only because I promised I would; any of several hundred entries iustified recognition.

To the rest of you who wrote but won't be wearing a T-shirt, I want you to know I read every entry and am sincerely grateful for your participation. Your recognition should lie in the fact you wrote an intelligent letter that was

Following are a few entries choentry submitted by Romeyn E. Tobin, address unknown I found it practically impossible you doughhead, then write in care

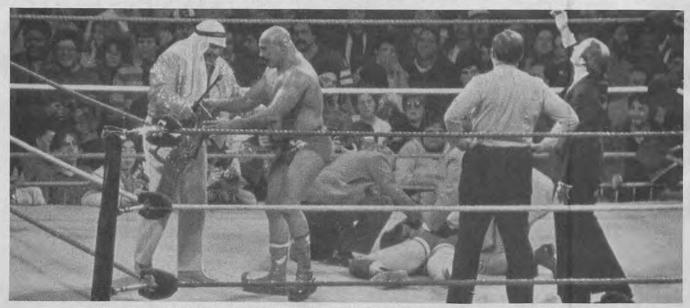
An astute Dave Zajaczek of

ed good ol' Bob Backlund and ended Howdy Doody's six-year reign of boredom.

The greatest moment in mat history was when, against all odds, Kerry Von Erich lifted the Ugandan maniac Kamala over his head and bodyslammed him, earning \$10,000 and proving impossible feats and fantastic dreams can be realized, gushes Joanna Shields of Barbados. Didn't I read those same words a videocassette box of on Flashdance?

Dwayne Soper, of Medicine Hat, Alberta, spent three pages convincing me the Roddy Piper-Adrian Adonis match at Wrestle-Mania III was the most important ever. A brief excerpt: Adonis and Piper were fighting for respect. Adonis wanted to regain the re-

(Continued on page 56)



Fred Blassie gives The Iron Sheik the WWF World belt after the Sheik defeated Bob Backlund, ending his almost-six-year reign. One "Insider" reader considers this the greatest moment in wrestling history.

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Hansen, Piper, Gagne.
September 1981/Stories include:
Patera, Koloff, Khan, Junkyard Dog.
January 1982/Stories include: Flair, Hogan, Race, Humperdink.

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Piper, Lawler, Brody.

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March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk. April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.

May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.

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July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Free-

birds, Rhodes, Youngblood, August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.

☐ JUNE 83

September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.

October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes. November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.

December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors. March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.

April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.



AUGUST 1984

May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich, June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.
July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.
August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.
September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.
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November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.

December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A. January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich. February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.

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August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid. September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A. October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.

November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.

December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.

January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.

February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.

March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude.

April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts

May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Holls.

July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A. August 1986/Stories include: Wrestle-Mania 2, Garvins, Martel, Fab Ones. September 1986/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham. October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors, November 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Flair, Bulldogs, Watts, Adams. December 1986/Stories include: Hogan-Adonis, R&R Express, Baby Doll.

June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs,

Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard.

January 1987/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Piper, T.A., Taylor. February 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Piper-Orndorff, Taylor, Flair.

March 1987/Stories include: Flair, Missy, Luger, Bulldogs, Koloffs. April 1987/Stories include: Windham, Steamboat, Ellering, Duggan. May 1987/Stories include: Windham &

Luger, Steamboat, Hogan-Andre. June 1987/Stories include: Piper-Adonis, Horsemen, Adams, Hall, Brody. July 1987/Stories include: Danny Davis, DiBiase, Rockers, Rotundo, Andersons.

August 1987/Stories include: Dusty & Nikita, Hogan, Mike Von, Cornette.

September 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Race, R&R Exp., Rich, Honky Tonk.

October 1987/Stories include: R&R Express Hogan, Taylor, Adams, Lawler.

press, Hogan, Taylor-Adams, Lawler. November 1987/Stories include: War Games, Mr. T, Bulldogs, Rhodes. December 1987/Stories include: Free-

birds, Rhodes, Magnum, Savage, Perez. January 1988/Stories include: R&R-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Garvin. February 1988/Stories include: Savage,

Kevin Von, Sting, Tully & Arn. March 1988/Stories include: Bigelow, Adams, Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds. April 1988/Stories include: Luger-Flair, Ultimate Warrior, Andre-Hogan-DiBiase.

May 1988/Stories include: Zbyszko, Di-Biase, Warriors, Rockers, Fritz Von. June 1988/Stories include: Warriors, Savage, R&R Express, Baby Doll. July 1988/Stories include: Hogan-Savage-DiBiase, Kerry & Hayes, Sting.

August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Missy Hyatt, Sting, Hayes, Honky Tonk. September 1988/SPECIAL ISSUE: Color coverage of WMIV, Parade of Champs, Crockett Cup. Plus: Lawler, Von Erich, Hart, Cornette.

October 1988/Stories include: Megapowers vs. Megabucks, Horsemen, Lawler.

November 1988/Stories include: Kerry vs. Lawler, Windham, Luger, Muraco. December 1988/Stories include: Powers of Pain, Ultimate, Flair, Piper.

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SSIGNMEN SSIGNMEN BY LIZ HUNTER

HE NIGHT BEFORE Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton won the NWA World tag team belts from Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson, I dined with Jim Cornette and his mother at San Dominico's, the latest canteen for New Yorkers with gourmet appetites and deep pockets. The invitation came by way of a messenger who rapped loudly on my apartment door at 4:30 that morning.

"How the heck did you get up here?" I barked, wondering at what bar my doorman was spending his working hours. "Do you have any idea what time it is?"

"Mr. Cornette wanted to make sure you were home," the lackey said, handing me a letter. "He hates to miss appointments."

"What's more important than sleep at four in the morning?" I asked, but the man had already left.

There was no sense in going back to sleep. I shuffled into the kitchen and put up a pot of coffee. Overcoming the temptation to toss Cornette's letter away with the old coffee grounds, I sat at the kitchen table and opened it.

Dear Liz: How nice to be with you this morning, if only through the mail. I would have called and left a message, but I know that you sometimes turn off your phone and answering machine in search of beauty sleep. Mother and I will be in town tonight and we insist you join us for dinner. A car will pick you up at 7:00 p.m. Under your name there is a selection of formal gowns in the Chanel section at Saks. Take whatev-



The money really started to come Jim Cornette's way after The Midnight Express won the NWA World tag team title. The night before the winning match, Liz Hunter joined Cornette and his mother for dinner. Hunter was not impressed.

er you'd like. We have lots to talk about. Jim.

You know what it's like when you forget to brush your teeth, and you wake up in the morning with breath smelling like a dead coyote's feet? The stench-even through the mail!-of Cornette's mealymouthed, rich-boy vaketyyak made me want to gargle with industrial-strength mouthwash.

In a sport not exactly brimming with Rhodes scholars, however, one must admit that Cornette gives a good interview. And he always picks up the tab. The first thing I did was go down to Saks Fifth Avenue and select four outrageously expensive Chanel dresses (total cost: \$14,450), went directly to refunds and ex-

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August 1982/COLOR PINUP: Dino Bravo. Steamboat & Rich, Andre, Martel, Piper, Blassie

October 1982/COLOR PINUP: Jerry Lawler. Ric Flair, Rhodes, Graham, Race, Funk Jr.

January 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ken Patera. Rick Steamboat, Rich, Brody, Sullivan, Backlund.

February 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Putski. Rhodes vs. Garvin, Snuka, Su-per Destroyer, Bockwinkel, Funk.

April 1983/COLOR PINUP: Superstar Graham. Mil Mascaras, Valentine, Orn-

June 1983/COLOR PINUP: Cowboy Bob Orton. Rick Martel, Von Erich, Slaughter, Muraco.

July 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Koloff. Tommy Rich, Patera, Von Erich, Snuka.

August 1983/COLOR PINUP: Larry Zbyszko. Roddy Piper, Sullivan, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Wrestling II.

October 1983/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. Tommy Rich, Johnson, Adonis, Rhodes, Piper.

November 1983/COLOR PINUP: Roddy Piper. Harley Race, Santana, Mascaras, Ellering, Valiant, Race.

December 1983/COLOR PINUP: Wahoo McDaniel. Dusty Rhodes, Hayes, Steamboat, Hansen, DiBiase.

January 1984/COLOR PINUP: Harley Race. Rick Martel, Snuka, Freebirds, Dillon, Sawyer.

February 1984/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Sunshine. Greg Valentine, Super Destroyer, Race, Sawyer, Abdullah.

June 1984/COLOR PINUP: Dick Slater. Ted DiBiase, Wrestling II, Magnum T.A., Patera, Hogan.

July 1984/COLOR PINUP: Paul Ellering. Jimmy Valiant, JYD, Fab Ones, Gagne, Windham.

August 1984/COLOR PINUP: Stan Hansen. Jerry Lawler, Sullivan, Slaugh-ter, Blackwell & Patera, Flair.

October 1984/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack. Kerry Von Erich, Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. Sgt. Slaughter, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana. Road Warriors, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A. Rick Martel, Hogan, Backlund,

April 1985/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin, Jimmy Snuka, Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes

June 1985/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham. Dusty Rhodes, Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, T.A.



MAY 1987

July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter. Hogan vs. Piper, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. Magnum T.A, Von Erich, Ho-gan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams, Rick Steamboat, Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage. Ric Flair, Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura. Great American Bash, Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hack-saw Duggan. Hulk Hogan, T.A., Brody. February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff. Mike Von Erich, Warriors, San-tana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. Wendi Richter, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. Road Warriors, Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

June 1986/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich. Hulk Hogan, Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

July 1986/COLOR PINUP: King Kong Bundy. R & R Express, Hall and Hennig, Ventura, Warriors.

August 1986/COLOR PINUP: Dusty Rhodes. Randy Savage, Lugar vs Race, Blanchard vs. Flair, Rude.

October 1986/COLOR PINUP: John Studd. Nikita Koloff, Savage vs. Bundy, Landell, Flair vs. Lugar, Simpson.

November 1986/COLOR PINUP: Baby Doll. British Bulldogs, Von Erich, Han-sen, Gordy, Flair-Tully-Arn-Ole.

December 1986/COLOR PINUP: Great American Bash. Great American Bash, Midnight Rockers, Von Erich, Windham.

January 1987/COLOR PINUP: Fabulous Freebirds. Roddy Piper, Nikita vs. T.A., Snuka, Simpson.

February 1987/COLOR PINUP: Savage & Elizabeth. UWF Tournament, T.A., Baby Doll, Hogan vs. Orndorff.

April 1987/COLOR PINUP: Lex Luger. Dusty & Nikita, DiBiase, DeBeers, Dingo, WWF Housecleaning.

May 1987/COLOR PINUP: Steve Williams. Andre-Hogan, UWF Tourny, Albano, Cornette, Dynamite Kid, Kerry.

June 1987/COLOR PINUP: Hulk Hogan. Magnum T.A., Can-Ams, Warriors, Freebirds, Hall.

July 1987/COLOR PINUP: Midnight Rockers. Steamboat-Savage, Luger, Duggan, Garvins, Sting.

August 1987/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Precious. Hogan-Andre, Warriors, Windham-Flair, Gordy, Bigelow.

October 1987/COLOR PINUP: Ted Di-Biase. Ric Flair, Williams, Rockers, Ho-gan vs. Steamboat, NWA & WWF.

November 1987/COLOR PINUP: George Steele. Nikita Koloff, Warriors, Harts, Hogan, Windham.

January 1988/COLOR PINUP: The Road Warriors. Ted DiBiase, Flair-Gar-vins, Hogan & Ventura, Zbyszko.

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April 1988/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. Lex Luger, Flair-Garvin, Kerry, Survivor Series, Iron Sheik.

May 1988/COLOR PINUP: Sting. Andre, Valentine-Beefcake, Flair, Cornette, Owen Hart.

June 1988/COLOR PINUP: Tully Blanchard. Hulk Hogan, Muraco, Perez, Rockers, Bunkhouse Stampede.

July 1988/COLOR PINUP: Curt Hennig. Hogan vs. Andre, Express vs. Rockers, Beefcake, Perez, Rotundo-Sting.

August 1988/COLOR PINUP: AI Perez. Savage & Hogan, Gilbert-Lawler, Four Horsemen, Kerry Von Erich.

October 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ultimate Warrior. Sting, Savage, Lawler, Williams, Steamboat, Varsity Club.

November 1988/COLOR PINUP: The Midnight Express. Hogan, Rhodes, Ex-press, Powers of Pain.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



RED BASTIEN

This favorite was known as "The Flying Redhead" during his long career. For the past several years, the former co-holder of the AWA World tag team championship (with Hercules Cortez) has been a trainer in California, instructing

stars like Sting, Max Pain, and The Ultimate Warrior. He also serves as a matchmaker for promoter Tony Vuknik, scheduling events in countries such as Yugoslaviá, the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia.



IVAN PUTSKI

Putski, one of the strongest and most popular wrestlers in the history of the WWF, has decided to hang up the wrestling trunks and call it a career. The "Polish Power," who won the WWF tag team title with Tito Santana in

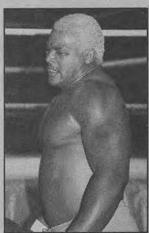
1979, is now concentrating his efforts on training his son, Scott, who has competed in several NWA matches. Putski is also the proprietor of his own Gold's Gym outlet in his hometown of Austin, Texas.



RON FULLER

Fuller has decided to leave the sport after folding the USA Wrestling promotion, which now has been merged with the Contentinal Wrestling Federation. A veteran of 23 years in the sport, the popular Fuller is the son of legendary wrestler

and promoter Buddy Fuller, and the brother of "Tennessee Stud" Robert Fuller. "Wrestling was really good to me," said Fuller, "but for now I'm off on a long vacation in Japan and Australia. I'll really miss all my fans."



BUTCH REED

After failing to win the WWF World title during the 14-man tournament at WrestleMania IV in March, "The Natural" decided to take a respite from the squared circle. Currently, Reed has been establishing himself as a championship-cali-

ber bulldogger at several rodeos near his home in Kansas City, Missouri. Reed has not ruled out a ring comeback, however, and insists he will return to the sport when the time is right.

INSIDE WRESTLING

HERCULES HERNANDEZ

150

GAPSULE PROFILE

ERCULES HERNANDEZ among the most powerful men in the sport ("Only a fool would say otherwise") ... As a young man, was obsessed with bodybuilding ("Spent hours in the basement pumping iron") ... Even in high school he was a brutal wrestler, never passing up an opportunity to brutalize his opponent ("The wimps couldn't take it") ... Was a bench-press champion in the midwest ("There was no real competition") ... Captured the attention of young manager Gary Royal ("I took one look at Hercules and knew this was a man I needed for my stable") ... His first match, against Sweet Brown Sugar, ended in a draw ("That masked moron was lucky to escape with his life") ... Wrestled as Assassin Il under the management of Paul Jones in 1983 ("A secret weapon in Jones' wars") ... Was unmasked by longtime Jones nemesis Jimmy Valiant ... Went to the Mid-South area. where he was managed by Jim Cornette ("The boy showed a lot of promise, but ultimately didn't have what it takes") ... Teamed with Ted DiBiase to win the Mid-South tag team title from The Rock 'n' Roll Express on December 3, 1984, in New Orleans ("Those rock 'n' roll punks stink!") ... Lost the belts to the Rock 'n' Rolls on Christmas Day, 1984 ("It's what you

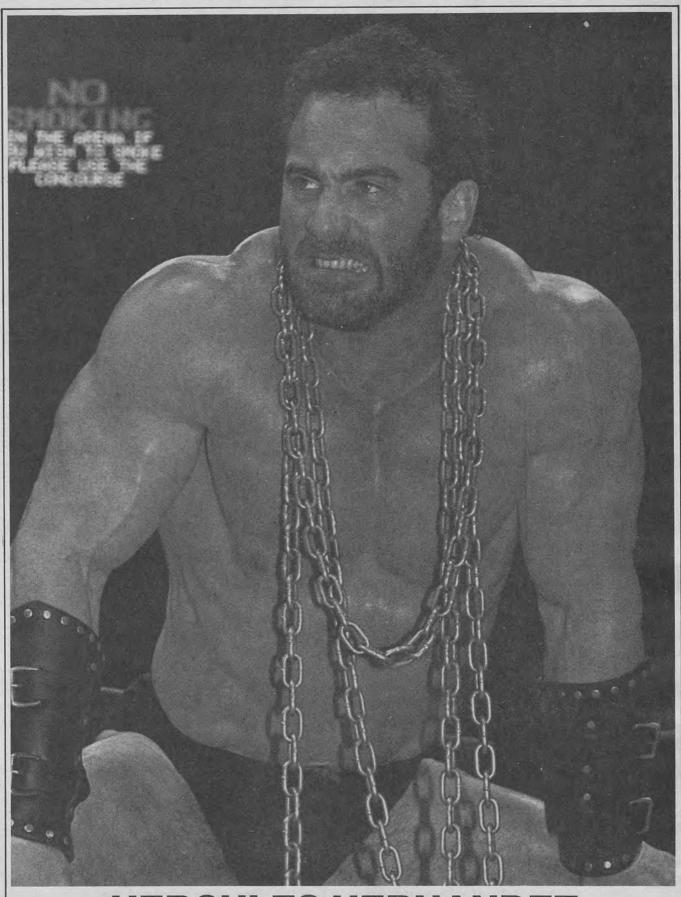


Hercules Hernandez twists Don Muraco's arm. Possessor of an outstanding physique, Hercules uses his power to optimum advantage in the ring. He was an important member of Bobby Heenan's family until they broke up recently; Heenan wanted to sell him to Ted DiBiase as a slave!

call dumb luck") ... Aided Sunshine in her war against World Class rulebreakers ... Moved on to Florida, where he defeated B. Brian Blair for the Southern title on May 26, 1985, in Orlando ("He was no 'killer bee' back then") ... Four weeks later, won the Florida title from Hector Guerrero ("A champion's champion; two belts at once") ... Abruptly vacated both belts when he left for the WWF ("Greater opportunities called") ... Brought into the federation by Fred Blassie, who claimed to have discovered him "in the Latin countries" ("Blassie knows where to find the best men') ... Slick then managed him until the manager made a deal with Bobby Heenan

("Heenan supposedly had the skills and the knowhow") ... A feud with Billy Jack Haynes centered around which man had the better full-nelson ("Billy Jack knows whose hold is more powerful") ... Wrestled Haynes to a double-countout at WrestleMania III ("The referee didn't know which way to look") ... Met his match in terms of power with The Ultimate Warrior, who pinned him at WrestleMania IV and on several other occasions ... Turned against Heenan when the manager tried to "sell" him to Ted DiBiase when DiBiase said he needed a slave ("A slave? Slavery died more than 100 years ago! DiBiase and Heenan will pay dearly for their mistake!")

CAPSULE PROFILE PINUP



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BRISTOL, TN By Charles Barnette



HACKSAW DUGGAN vs. TED DIBIASE



Duggan was in control for most of the match until Virgil tripped him coming off the ropes. When Duggan went out of the ring after Virgil, DiBiase mounted the top rope and hit Duggan in the back with a double-axhandle. After both men quickly returned to the ring, Duggan smashed DiBiase with a shoulderblock. Before Duggan got the three-count, Virgil interfered, so Duggan won by DQ. OTHER BOUTS: Jake Roberts pinned Rick Rude . . . Demolition beat The British Bulldogs . . . Dino Bravo beat Ken Patera by default . . . Ron Bass defeated Hillbilly Jim . . . George Steele beat Danny Davis by countout . . . The Blue Blazer pinned Barry Horowitz.

PHILADELPHIA, PA By Paul Stefanowicz



MIKE ROTUNDO vs. NIKITA KOLOFF



This match for Rotundo's NWA TV title was scientific for much of the early going. But Kevin Sullivan's interference angered Nikita and caused tempers to flare. Koloff got a three-count on Rotundo after hitting him with the Russian sickle, but his celebration was shortlived as referee Tommy Young realized Rotundo's foot was on the ropes and ordered the match to continue. Nikita then flipped Rotundo over the top rope and was disqualified.

OTHER BOUTS: Sting defeated Barry Windham by DQ . . . The Midnight Express beat Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson . . . Dusty Rhodes defeated Kevin Sullivan . . . The Road Warriors beat Rip Morgan & The Russian Assassin . . . Lex Luger defeated Ric Flair by DQ.

SYRACUSE, NY By Andrew Savona



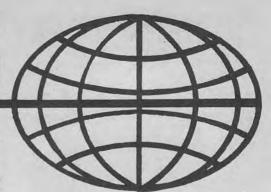
BAD NEWS BROWN vs. KOKO B. WARE



Brown attained an early advantage by attacking Ware before the opening bell. He administered a double-axhandle to the back of Koko's neck and pummeled him repeatedly with fists to the face. After absorbing more punishment, Koko finally took charge. He hit Brown with a vicious clothesline, then followed up with a suplex and a dropkick from the top rope. Brown recovered, however, and drilled Koko with the "ghetto blaster" superkick to score the three-count. OTHER BOUTS: Terry Taylor beat Scott Casey by submission . . . Big Bossman defeated Ken Patera . . . The

Bossman defeated Ken Patera . . . The Honky Tonk Man beat Brutus Beefcake . . . Ted DiBiase defeated Hacksaw Duggan . . . Danny Davis pinned Mike Masters . . . The British Bulldogs beat Demolition by DQ.

WRESTLING



CINCINNATI, OH By Jeff Gorman



RIC FLAIR vs. LEX LUGER



The crowd at the Cincinnati Gardens cheered wildly when Luger powerslammed the champion late in the match and applied the "torture rack" backbreaker. As he struggled to break free, Flair kicked referee Tommy Young to the mat. J.J. Dillon rescued Flair by hitting Luger with his shoe. Flair threw Luger over the top rope, but Luger came back with a sunset flip and a second referee counted a pin. But Young disqualified Flair for throwing Luger over the ropes

Luger over the ropes.

OTHER BOUTS: The Road Warriors beat Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson by DQ . . . Barry Windham beat Nikita Koloff by countout . . . The Midnight Express beat Rick Morton & Brad Armstrong . . . Sting pinned Al Perez . . . Steve Williams pinned Russian Assassin . . The Fantastics beat The Varsity Club.

TULSA, OK By Diane Seals



SHAUN SIMPSON vs. JACK VICTORY



This was a grueling, bloody chain match. The momentum swung back and forth as both men resorted to brawling to gain an advantage. Late in the match, Buddy Roberts came out to ringside wearing a black glove, which he used to try to knock Simpson out. This premeditated plan, however, backfired as Roberts unintentionally struck Victory, thus earning Simpson an easy pinfall.

OTHER BOUTS: Jimmy Jack Funk and Matt Borne battled to a time-limit draw ... Steve Simpson defeated Iceman Parsons by DQ ... Michael Hayes & Steve Cox defeated The Samoan Swat Team by DQ.

LOUISVILLE, KY By Charles Kellar



PHIL HICKERSON vs. SCOTT STEINER



This match was for Hickerson's CWA title. Hickerson tried to hit Steiner with a chain, but Steiner hit Hickerson first and the chain flew into the crowd. When Hickerson's manager Downtown Bruno asked the crowd to give him the chain back, they refused. Hickerson gained an advantage with illegal tactics, with Bruno also getting in some cheap shots. Just as a recovered Steiner was attempting a leap from the top rope, Hickerson got his hands on a second chain, hit Steiner with it, and got the pin. OTHER BOUTS: Eric Embry defeated Billy Travis . . . Austin Idol defeated Jerry Lawler by DQ . . . Jeff Jarrett & Little Coco defeated Robert Fuller & Downtown Bruno by DQ.



matt Plans Brock's BROCK'S AND STAND

BAYAMON, PR: My biggest mistake of the year so far? Listening to Stu Saks when he told me to come down here to cover the World Wrestling Council's 15th anniversary show. Not that I don't like the World Wrestling Council. Its bloody, violent style of wrestling appeals to a base instinct of mine that I'm almost ashamed to admit exists. The WWC is fine. It's Bayamon—Juan Ramon Lobriel Stadium in particular-that gets on my nerves. We all know what happened here back in July: Bruiser Brody, one of the greatest wrestlers this world has ever seen, was stabbed to death in the Lobriel Stadium locker room. Try as I did to put it out of my mind, I couldn't. I watched Ronnie Garvin pin The Iron Sheik in a great match, but all I could think about was Brody. Carlos Colon made Hercules Ayala submit to a figure-four leglock in a fire match, but all I could think about was Brody. Hurricane Castillo Jr. and Miguel Perez Jr. beat Dan Kroffat and Bobby Jaggers, but all I could think about was Brody. Finally, I gave in. I took a walk down to the locker room where "it" happened and took a look around. I saw the shower where the stabbing supposedly took place, but it didn't look like anything had happened there. In fact, life has gone on in Bayamon. A woman is without her husband, a child is without his father, the world is without one of its greatest athletes, and life goes on. I wish there was a way we could've just stopped the world for a few minutes to mourn the passing of a great man, but it just can't happen. I walked out of the stadium a depressed man and grabbed the first plane out.

PHILADELPHIA, PA: Little Red Rooster? One Man Gang has found his African heritage and is now named Akeem? I thought the WWF had gone about as low as it could go when Elizabeth removed her skirt (exposing, by the way, a pretty shapely pair of gams) at SummerSlam 88, but this is too much. Why is Terry Taylor calling himself Little Red Rooster? How did One Man Gang become an Afri-



TERRY TAYLOR

can? And while I'm at it, why is Hacksaw Duggan still allowed to bring a 2x4 into the ring? Why did the WWF allow a naked Rick Ride to appear on TV? Where does Bobby Heenan get off trying to sell Hercules Hernandez as a slave? And who's the jokester that decided to air an "interview" with Matilda, the British Bulldogs' mutt? I was watching the Bulldogs wrestle on TV the other day when, all of a sudden, Matilda appeared in the corner of the screen! All she did was bark! Maybe somebody found that cute, but if you ask me, the WWF has become a little too cute. Which, after about 130 words, brings me to the whole point of this little diatribe: the defection of Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson to the WWF. To me, this is worse than Peggy Fleming joining the Ice Capades (which she once did). How can two serious wrestlers like Blanchard and Anderson do this? I can understand the appeal of the almighty buck, but this is a serious sellout. Blanchard and Anderson never resorted to a Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

flashy style—they gave some of the most boring interviews I've ever heard—but they got the job done. How does that style fit in the WWF? What does Vince McMahon Jr. plan to do with these two? To me, Blanchard and Anderson epitomized what the NWA was all about: no-nonsense, exciting, dirtunder-the-fingernails wrestling. The news of their defection shocked me more than anything I've heard in years.

LAKELAND, FL: They call it Tigertown because the Detroit baseball team trains here during the spring, but the only tiger I saw was this kid in the ring who goes by the name of Dustin Rhodes. If the name sounds familiar, it should: he's the son of three-time former NWA World champion Dusty Rhodes. In horse racing, they call that good breeding. The younger Rhodes is 6'5" and weighs 254, and he seems to have all the determination that made "The American Dream" a great one. Dustin, as it turns out, was trained by his father and even refereed a few matches in the NWA this past summer before he finally stepped into the ring. Well, all I can say is that there's a lot of Dusty in Dustin. He beat Rex King in about three minutes and finished him off with a bionic elbow, his father's favorite move. Dustin started on the defensive, which is something Dusty often does, and then came back strongly for



DUSTIN RHODES

the win, which is something his father also does. Later in the night, Dustin competed in a 15-man battle royal and was the ninth man out. I can pretty much guarantee, though, that Dustin is going to be winning those battle royals before long, and I wouldn't be surprised to see him become a top NWA contender within a year or two. As I said, good breeding. Dustin Rhodes is bred for success.

MEMPHIS, TN: Here's some good news: Kerry Von Erich, the World Class champ, and Jerry Lawler, the AWA World champ, are planning to square off on December 13 in Chicago in another



RONNIE GARVIN VS. GREG GAGNE

title unification match. According to the stipulations of the bout, there *must* be a winner, so one of these guys is going to walk out of the ring without a belt. That alone will make this card worth watching, but there's more: Sgt. Slaughter is going for revenge against Col. DeBeers, and Greg Gagne will try to regain the AWA TV strap from Ronnie Garvin. Then there's Manny Fernandez vs. Wahoo McDaniel in an Indian strap match, Texas champ Iceman Parsons, The Rock 'n' Roll Express, and a women's battle royal. It's time to reserve those plane tickets to Chicago.



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THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS MUST DECIDE-



T'S BEEN ALMOST two years since Senior Editor Bill Apter and his wife Andrea triple-dated with Rick Morton and Robert Gibson of The Rock 'n' Roll Express. But Apter still hasn't forgotten that night.

"The NWA sponsored a 'Win A Dream Date With The Rock 'n' Roll Express' contest, and the winners, two

lovely girls, were flown up to New York City with Ricky and Robert for a great date," recalled Bill. "We went to see the Broadway show *Cats*, had dinner at Hawaii Kai, then went dancing at a club. Then the NWA put the girls up at one of the best hotels in New York. We all had a great time.

"But the one thing I remember most about that night was seeing a side of Ricky and Robert I had never seen before. Although I know them both very well, I couldn't believe how indecisive they were. I said to Gibson, 'Where do you want to have dinner?' and he said, 'I don't care.' Then I said to Morton, 'Well, what are you in the

It's been a year of turmoil for Rick Morton and Robert Gibson, who have changed federations several times and even broken up once. Now, as 1989 approaches, it's time for the Rock 'n' Rolls to decide which direction they're heading

mood for?' and he said 'I don't know.' Finally, I said to them, 'How the heck do you guys decide when to tag in and out? Ricky said, 'I don't know!'

"You know, looking back, I'm not surprised about what's happened to the Rock 'n' Rolls over the past year or so. When they left the NWA last January, I said, 'Okay, they're gone. Maybe they'll come back, but it doesn't sound like it.' Then in June, they did come back. So, I figured, they're here to stay. But in August, I was shocked to find out that they had split up and Gibson had left the NWA.

"So Morton calls me in mid-September, and what does he say? 'Hey Bill, guess what? Me and Robert are back together again!' A few days later, I went down to Memphis. Sure enough, Ricky and Robert were there at an AWA TV taping. I said to Ricky, 'When are you guys gonna make up your minds?' and he answered, 'Well, you know us Bill, we're a couple of spontaneous guys. We like to do things on instinct.'

But Morton and Gibson have no idea what their spontaneity, which has resulted in several upheavals over the past year, has meant to the quality of their team and the psyche of thousands of Rock 'n' Roll Express fans. Will The Rock 'n' Roll Express ever be the same again? Will their fans ever be the same again?

"I just can't take it anymore," said 15-year-old Barbara Kenville of Greenville, South Carolina. "First they're together, then they're apart, then they're together again. Then they're in the NWA, then they're out of the NWA, then they're back again, then they're out again. It's gotten to the point where I'd rather they just break up for good than keep playing with my heart."

And there's every reason to believe that the Rock 'n' Rolls *should* break up.

It's been more than a year since Morton and Gibson lost the NWA World tag belts to Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson. That might not sound like a long time, but it's the longest the four-time World champs have gone



Morton executes an armdrag takedown on Col. DeBeers (above). Gibson struggles with Ronnie Garvin (below). The Rock 'n' Roll Express is back together . . . for now.



without a major title since they won the belts for the first time on July 9, 1985.

During their brief return to the NWA, they were distant contenders for Tully and Arn's title. They weren't on the July 10 Great American Bash card in Baltimore, and have received only a handful of title shots. In fact, they were getting overshadowed by a fellow rock 'n' roll tag team, The Fantastics. Even the fans seemed to be deserting them *en masse*.

Now that they're back in the AWA

for the second time this year, the Express faces a similar problem. The Top Guns—John Paul and Ricky Rice—have attracted fans much like the Rock 'n' Rolls once did.

Of course, the situation probably wouldn't have become so bad if the Rock 'n' Rolls hadn't left in the first place. Upon their initial departure from the NWA, Morton and Gibson were the number-one contenders to Tully and Arn's belts. The Fantastics still hadn't arrived on the scene. In fact, if the Rock 'n' Rolls hadn't left, there's a

good chance they'd be the five-time champs right now!

And what is one to make of their recent breakup?

Gibson and Morton claim that they didn't break up (Gibson says he needed a brief vacation). But when Gibson did return, why did he go to the AWA instead of the NWA? Perhaps Ricky and Robert are experiencing a problem where they simply don't know what they want to do. They can't live with each other, and they can't live without each other.

Now they must do something each apparently finds difficult: make up their minds. For the good of their careers, for the good of the fans, and for the good of the game, Morton and Gibson must decide whether they want to stay together or split apart, whether they want to stay in the AWA or go back to the NWA.



"It's hard to imagine them apart," said Kenville, "but maybe it would be better for everyone. You know, they say that all good things must come to an end, and Ricky and Robert have been a great thing. But we'll always have fond memories of them. Even when they came back to the NWA, it wasn't the same. They don't seem as excited about wrestling as they used to."

Morton, however, insists that isn't true.

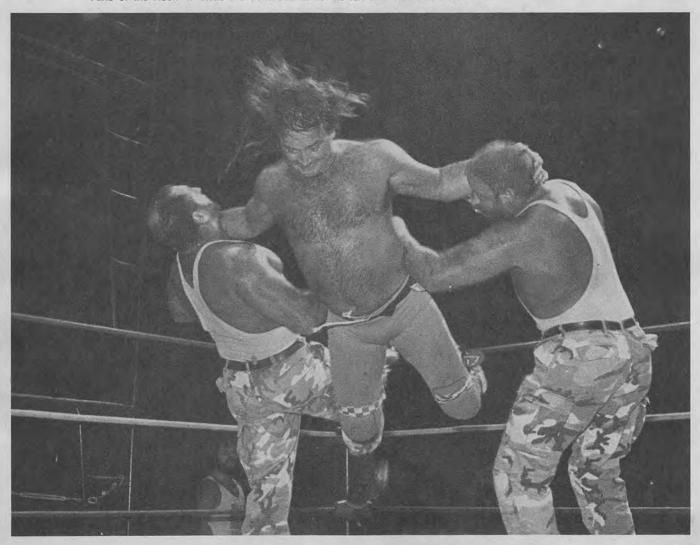
"I love wrestling, It's my life," he said.

And Gibson says he wants to wrestle forever.

"It's the greatest sport in the world," he said.

But maybe they're better off apart. If not, they ought to keep quiet and get down to business—for the good of everyone.

Morton and Gibson double-team Teijho Khan (above). Gibson clotheslines both Sheepherders (below). Fans of the Rock 'n' Rolls are confused as to Morton and Gibson's intentions.



WHO YOU'LL **CHEER AND WHO** YOU'LL HATE IN

Cheers for Ted DiBiase and Andre the Giant? Jeers for Hulk Hogan and Randy Savage? The way things are going in the WWF, almost anything can happen—particularly when the Megabucks and the Megapowers are involved!

TED DiBIASE WAS once one of the most beloved wrestlers in the now-defunct UWF. Andre the Giant was once the most popular wrestler in the world. There was a time, both in the WWF and the AWA, when fans hated Hulk Hogan. And as for Randy Savage, we don't have to remind you about what he did to Rick Steamboat and the way he treated his beautiful manager Elizabeth.

Get ready folks! Before long, "The Million-Dollar Man" might be donating his millions to charity, Andre could be a gentle giant again, Hogan could be calling the Hulkamaniacs simply maniacs, and the "Macho Man's" evil side, which we've seen so many times, could resurface with a series of deadly attacks on his rivals and evil treatment of Elizabeth.

Because as 1988 turns to 1989, it's obvious that things are changing with the Megapowers and the Megabucks. So, who you'll cheer and who you'll boo in 1989 could be very different from who you've been cheering and booing lately. And while it's unlikely that all four men will switch, it's clear that the WWF is about to undergo some drastic changes. Here's a look at what *might* happen:

Ted DiBiase. The "Million-Dollar Man" is frustrated by his inability to win the WWF World title from Randy Savage, and it looks



Ted DiBiase kicks Hulk Hogan in the chest at SummerSlam 88 (above). Randy Savage twists the "Million-Dollar Man's" arm with gusto (below).



like he won't fare any better in the future. Savage recently scored several pinfall victories over DiBiase, and now Andre the Giant is getting most of the title shots.

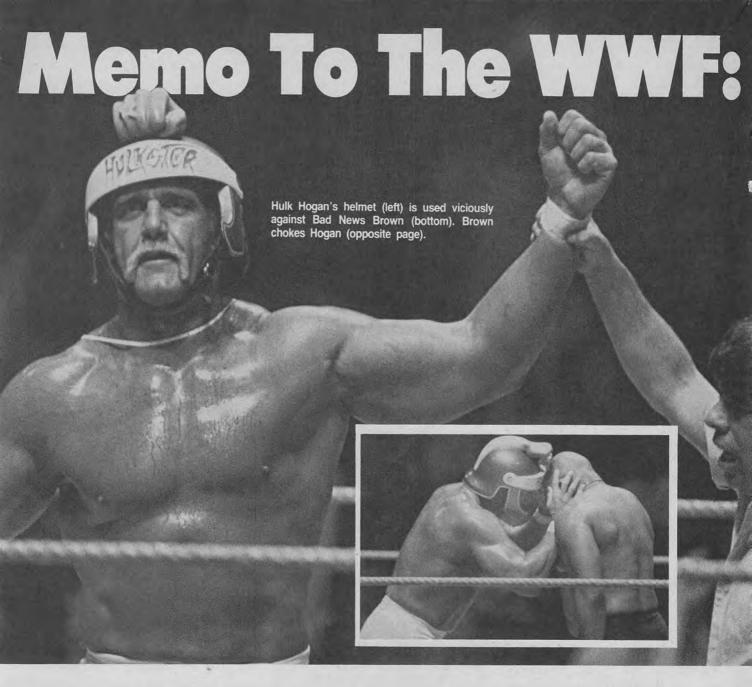
DiBiase is beginning to realize that money *can't* buy everything. It couldn't buy the belt, and it couldn't buy a victory over the Megapowers at SummerSlam 88. DiBiase bribed special referee Jesse Ventura on national TV but "The Body" had no choice but to make the three-count—however reluctantly—that won the match for Hogan and Savage.

DiBiase, however, isn't likely to become a fan favorite. He's been that route before in the UWF and was equally unsuccessful. Besides, what are the fans' cheers' worth to DiBiase? And why should he change his tactics? DiBiase is one of the finest overall wrestlers in the sport, but doesn't seem to have the important intangibles necessary to push him over the top and make him champion.

DiBiase is rich, and he'll remain rich. He also isn't champion and isn't cheered by the fans. That probably won't change in 1989.

Andre the Giant. It's hard to believe that Andre was once so beloved, but he was. For most of his 17-year career, the 7'5", 497-pound behemoth was the most popular man in the sport, a gentle

(Continued on page 54)



THIS STORY IS directed to the WWF and to the officials and commissioners who ought to be doing the jobs that they're currently ignoring.

We know you have your share of odd characters. The British Bulldogs seek managerial guidance from a dog. Jake Roberts feels abandoned without his snake. And Koko B. Ware would be lost without his bird, Frankie.

While these accessories may help create an atmosphere of intimidation for their owners, none ever directly influenced the results of a match. Even in the WWF, wrestlers

still need a healthy dose of athletic skill to win a bout.

But there's a new sideshow in your WWF circus. Hulk Hogan has begun wearing a bizarre form of motorcycle helmet into the ring: a hard plastic helmet emblazoned with the word "Hulkster" and adorned with a fist!

While this might not sound like anything odd for the flamboyant Hogan, there's an important twist: "The Hulkster" uses this helmet as a weapon.

You know it, you've seen it, and you've ignored it.

The man who advises legions of

Hulkamaniacs to "eat your vitamins, say your prayers, and be true to your country" is now clearly betraying his own philosophy. Maybe Hogan ought to adopt a new creed: "Kids, eat your vitamins, say your prayers, and brutally punish an opponent with an extremely violent and illegal foreign object."

Banning the helmet would be the sensible step for you to make. *Inside Wrestling* condemns the use of foreign objects, no matter how popular the man using them.

But the fact that Hogan is arguably the most popular wrestler of all time will make it difficult for you

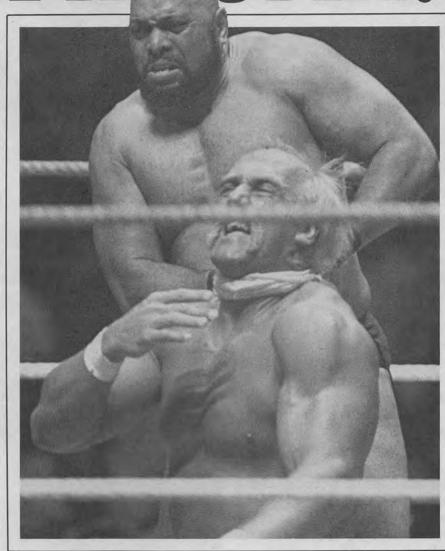
BANTHE HELMET— OR BAN HULK HAGAN!

to act against him. Part of your job, understandably, is to give the fans what they want. You want Hogan to triumph, so you won't dare take away your star attraction's tools of victory—however illegal those tools might be.

That's a shame. If you had the courage to stand up for justice rather than merely pander to the whims of your top star, an important example could be set—not only for the fans and the WWF, but for the entire wrestling world. Sadly, however, Hogan continues to use his helmet as a weapon, secure in the knowledge that you won't touch him.

In the past, many wrestlers have been banned for illegal activities. Eddie Gilbert was suspended from the Continental area for unwarranted violence, and Dusty Rhodes was suspended from the NWA for brutalizing Tully Blanchard and NWA President Jim Crockett with a baseball bat.

Unfortunately, sanctions are the exception and not the rule. Federations have traditionally avoided (Continued on page 62)



Since SummerSlam 88, Hulk Hogan has been hardheaded—and we don't mean stubborn. Hogan has been wearing a motorcycle helmet into the ring and using it as a weapon during his matches! Attention, WWF: It's time for you to ban the helmet. If not, you ought to ban the helmet's owner—now!

REASONS CANNOT

WESOME!" "HE'S THE best wrestler I've ever seen!" "A future world champion for sure!" "He's gonna rule the 1990s!" "Unlimited potential!"

For most of 1988, fans, wrestlers, and the media have all agreed about Sting. This California native is one of the most exciting wrestlers of the decade.

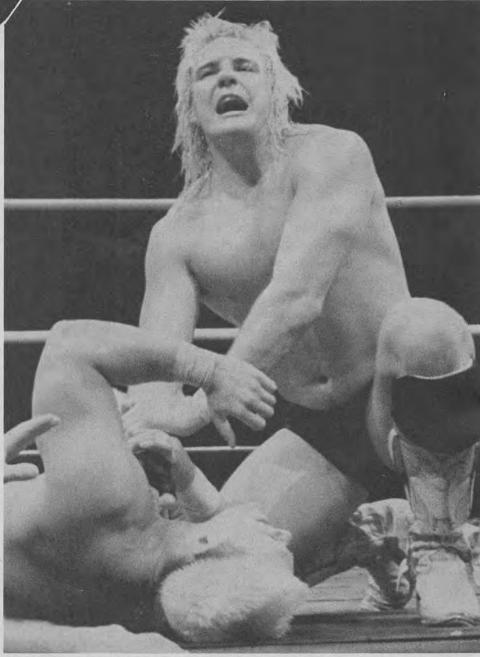
Barry Windham, the current holder of the NWA U.S. championship, is the current target of this young firebrand. The U.S. champion is usually considered the number-one contender to the NWA World title, and Sting clearly considers Windham a steppingstone to Ric Flair. Most observers also believe that Windham has been on the verge of losing his belt to Sting.

So why hasn't Sting beaten Barry Windham?

"I've already proven myself against Flair," Sting said, exuding his usual wealth of boyish charm and enthusiasm. "Now I've decided to knock off that other yellow Horseman. That U.S. belt should look nice around my waist."

Thus far, however, Sting's waist remains unadorned by gold. In match after match, Windham has proven to be Sting's toughest opponent. In match after match, it appears that Sting may have met a man he simply cannot defeat.

"What did he expect, a day at the park?" spat Windham. "I'm sick and tired of all this hype that



Barry Windham puts the claw on Sting (above). After an outstanding series of matches against NWA World champion Ric Flair, Sting appeared certain to win Windham's U.S. title, but he hasn't done it yet. Is something—or someone—holding him back?

Sting gets. I've held the U.S. title for months, but I've never gotten the credit for it I deserve. Well, now I'm gonna take my frustra-

tions out on that young punk. He may be a 'hot young star,' but he's never gonna take this belt."

What does Windham know that

WHYSTING DEFEAT BARRY WINDHAM



Sting braces for Windham's chop. At times, Windham's considerable experience has helped him overcome Sting's slightly superior physical skills.

the rest of the NWA would love to learn? Why is he the only man who's been able to frustrate Sting on a regular basis? *Inside Wrestling* has pinpointed 10 factors that have come into play during the Windham-Sting confrontations. Each is an important key to Sting's quest of capturing the U.S. title—and to his future success.

Experience. While Sting continues to improve his scientific knowledge and tactical strategies, Windham is already an acknowledged master in both areas. Windham is a eight-year veteran, while Sting is just completing his third year as a pro. There isn't a facet of wrestling that Windham is not familiar with, from planning match strategies to pacing himself

for lengthy bouts. Sting seems to have had no game plan at all, figuring his natural ability should be enough to defeat Windham. Sting has been impressive, but he hasn't been a winner.

The claw. Windham has once again been using the favorite finishing hold of his father, Blackjack Mulligan—the claw. Used early in Windham's career and later abandoned, the claw is a devastating hold that has resulted in several key victories for the U.S. champion. Sting has spent several minutes during each match struggling to break free of Windham's grip. Learning a counter should be a top priority for the challenger.

Background. Mulligan has been his son's biggest supporter ever since he debuted in 1980. Windham has been groomed to become a professional wrestler since elementary school. Barry's frequent conversations with his father enable him to fine-tune his abilities through the eyes of a far more experienced man. Sting can only depend on his friends—one

(Continued on page 58)

Sting has been the NWA's biggest success story of 1988, but he's been stopped cold in his quest for the U.S. title by a roadblock named Barry Windham. Here are 10 reasons why Sting has been unable to defeat Windham—the most important and difficult foe of his career!

HOTSEAT

ARN ANDERSON

"THE FOUR HORSEMEN WERE A DYNASTY, BUT IT'S ALL OVER NOW!"

A FTER YEARS OF dominating tag team wrestling, Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard have left The Four Horsemen. Will J.J. Dillon's rulebreaking organization—or, for that matter, the NWA—ever again be the same?

Anderson's six-year NWA tenure featured a host of titles, all achieved through his shrewd blend of science and rulebreaking. The youngest member of the legendary Anderson wrestling family, Arn captured the Georgia National tag team title with uncle Ole Anderson in 1985. A year later, he proved his skills as a singles wrestler by defeating Wahoo McDaniel for the NWA TV title.

But the greatest success for Anderson has been as a member of Dillon's ruthless Four Horsemen, formed in 1986. Arn and Ole Anderson, Ric Flair, and Blanchard were the initial formation of the group that has produced an unprecedented string of championships.

For most of 1988, the Horsemen had dominated the title picture in the NWA, but the autumn brought winds of change. Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton, The Midnight Express, captured the NWA World tag team title from Anderson and Blanchard on September 10 in Philadelphia. Immediately fol-

lowing that loss, Anderson and Blanchard announced they would soon be wrestling in the WWF.

Inside Wrestling Assistant Editor Bob Smith spoke with "The Enforcer" during a visit to Charlotte, North Carolina. Anderson is a man eager to prove his worth among the host of talented grapplers currently competing in the WWF.

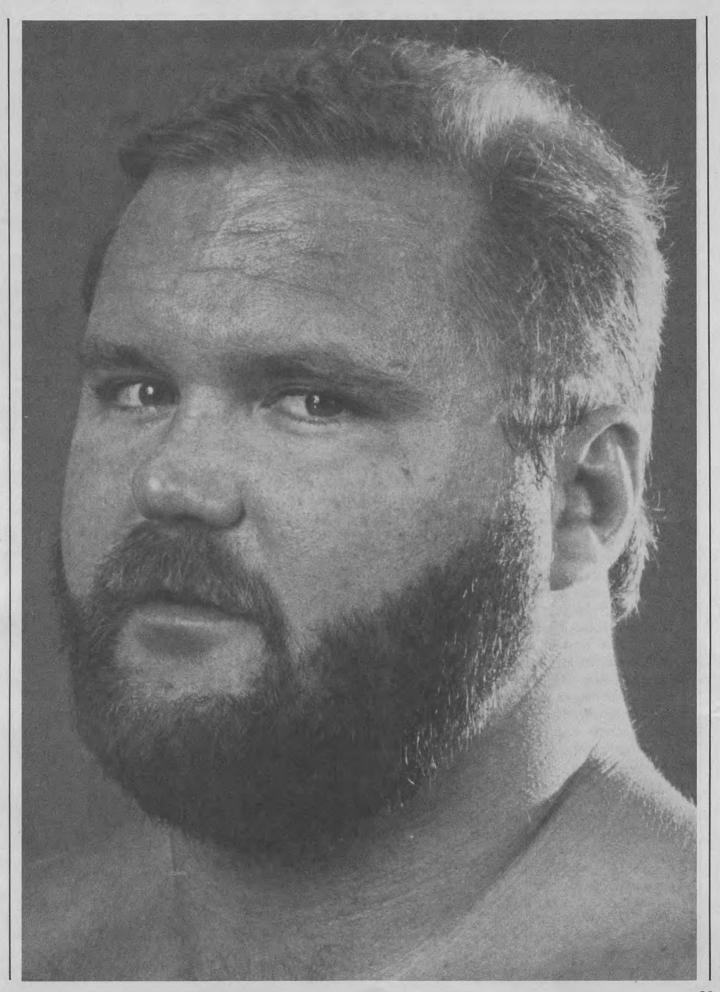
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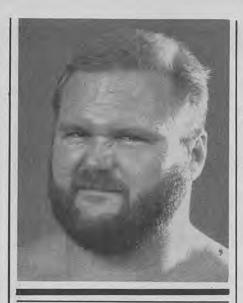
The challenges in the NWA have run out, so now I'm going to the WWF. There's no doubt in my mind that I'll be successful.

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Q: Arn, you've enjoyed a tremendous career in the NWA, but now you've decided to leave it all behind and enter the WWF. It must be a bittersweet feeling to leave the federation where you and the other Horsemen have been so dominant for the past three years.

- A: Well, Bob, to be honest with you, I came into the NWA as a virtual unknown. I more or less had no reputation, other than my family name. Anything I achieved I managed to do on my own. I can't deny that the NWA had some incredible competition during my years there. They've had some of the finest athletes ever to put on a pair of wrestling tights, and I feel like I rank right at the top with the best of them. But right now, I feel like I've peaked there. The challenges in the NWA have run out. so now I'm going to the WWF. There is no doubt in my mind that I'll be every bit as successful in the future as I have been in the past.
- Q: You're leaving the NWA on a sour note, however. When you and Tully lost the NWA World tag team title to The Midnight Express September 10 at the Philadelphia Civic Center, it had to be one of the most incredible upsets of the year.
- A: It was incredible. You know, it seems like everybody in this country, whether consciously or subconsciously, always pulls for the underdog. Rest assured that anytime The Midnight Express wrestled Tully and myself they were clearly





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I don't think there's another team on this earth that's nearly as good as Tully [Blanchard] and myself.

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the underdogs. I think even the referee, Tommy Young, was pulling for [Stan] Lane and [Bobby] Eaton. Then, when that double-pin came about, with Tully on top of Lane, and Eaton illegally pinning me, it never occurred to Young that I wasn't the legal man in the ring at the time. The entire situation was not only dishonest, but it was clear favoritism for those guys. [Jim] Cornette is probably very happy right now.

- Q: One man who isn't very happy is J.J. Dillon, your former manager in The Four Horsemen. With Dilion's business acumen and the talents of yourself, Tully, Ric Flair, and Barry Windham, the Horsemen were the most successful organization in wrestling, both professionally and financially. There's never been anything quite like it.
- A: True. The Four Horsemen were comprised of the absolute elite in this sport. The thing that made us

- so unique is that we also had the four most intelligent competitors in wrestling all in one place. We didn't need a manager to do our talking for us.
- Q: You didn't? It seems like Dillon did quite a *lot* of talking for everyone who's ever been a Horseman.
- A: Well, J.J. did express some of our views from time to time, but mainly his function was to handle our finanical matters. First and foremost, the Horsemen were wrestlers. We were great singles wrestlers, and we were great in any tag team, six-man, or eight-man formation. What made us so unique is that we didn't depend on a manager to do our thinking for us.
- Q: Did your decision to leave create any bad feelings among J.J., Barry, or Ric?
- A: Tully and I haven't created any animosity that I know of.
- Q: Perhaps. But we've gotten word that Flair was quite upset when he found out you were leaving.
- A: Of course he was. Ric is really upset to the point of being sick about it, and we're sorry that we have to part with him, too. Ric and I are family, we're best friends, and

- we're partners. Anytime you lose a situation like that, it's a little depressing. It's the hardest thing I've ever had to do. But on the other hand, it's been the easiest thing I've ever had to do. Tully and I are seeking new horizons now. You have to broaden your career, and when you do that you have to leave people behind—even if it's only for a short time—that you really don't want to.
- Q: A lot of the fans don't know how to react to all this. I mean, the Horsemen, whether you loved or hated them, were without rivals in winning championships.
- A: That's true. The Four Horsemen were a dynasty, but it's all over now. It was the kind of thing that can never be recaptured again, I think. But the names Flair, Anderson, and Blanchard will always be on top of the heap, and you can count on that.
- Q: The WWF is a pretty big place in which to compete, though. Blanchard and Anderson were the most infamous team in the NWA, but now you're going into a completely different environment.
- A: That's true. Tully and I have never



Ric Flair, Am Anderson, J.J. Dillon, and Tully Blanchard made The Four Horsemen the most powerful unit in wrestling, but now Tully and Am have left the NWA for the WWF.



Anderson armlocks Lex Luger, his former Horsemen partner (above). No longer will Anderson battle Dusty Rhodes the way he did in War Games/The Match Beyond (below).

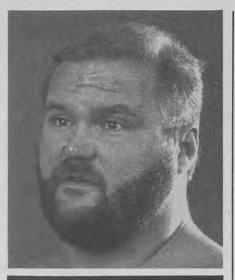


wrestled anyone from the WWF on a regular basis. The best thing we can hope to do is have an opportunity to prove ourselves, but that's all we've ever needed. Hopefully, by coming into the WWF with the reputation of being top caliber wrestlers, we'll be able to meet the better teams right off the bat. I think we've earned the right to get a title shot against Demolition within a six-month period.

- Q: There are a host of other teams that are vying for that same chance. There are The Hart Foundation, The Killer Bees, The Young Stallions, Warlord and Barbarian, The Rougeaus, The Bolsheviks, and The British Bulldogs all standing in line waiting for shots at the champions.
- A: That doesn't matter much. I don't

think there's another team on this earth, and that includes Demolition, that's nearly as good as Tully and myself. The only way to get a title shot is to prove ourselves. We're prepared for anything we have to do.

- Q: What are your impressions of some of the top teams in the WWF?
- A: The Hart Foundation is definitely a fine team. It's a great combination, because they have the technical ability of Bret Hart matched with the sheer power of Jim Neidhart. I've watched Warlord and Barbarian on about 50 occasions already. Those guys are probably the two strongest wrestlers on earth.
- Q: Even stronger than The Road Warriors?
- A: No question. They are one of the most powerful forces in wrestling



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The Four Horsemen were comprised of the absolute elite in this sport. We had the four most intelligent competitors in wrestling.

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today. But what makes Tully and myself great is that we are welleducated, *intellectual* wrestlers. We know this game inside and out, because we are the greatest students of this business.

- Q: Just from listening to you, I get the impression that you and Tully truly believe you will be WWF World tag team champions before long.
- A: Absolutely. Tully and I are the greatest team in the world today. We firmly believe that, and it doesn't matter where we compete. The cream will rise to the top, just like it always does.
- Q: Arn, thank you for this interview. It will be quite interesting to chart your progress during the next several months.
- A: Thank you. I predict we will have a greater impact after six months in the WWF than any team that has ever come before us. Nobody is gonna know what to do with us!

Kerry Von Erich





As tag team partners, Jerry Lawler and Kerry Von Erich pummel Buddy Landell . . .



... and as feuding enemies, Von Erich puts the claw on Lawler during one of their many unification battles.

JERRY LAWLER AND Kerry Von Erich are teammates.

"There's no better tag team partner in the world than Kerry," insists Lawler, the AWA World champion.

Jerry Lawler and Kerry Von Erich are bitter rivals.

"Jerry Lawler acts like a desperate man at times," said Von Erich, the reigning World Class champion. "When he's down, he'll do anything to hold on to his title."

These two champions are the focal points of one of wrestling's most confusing situations. Most times, the two superstars are battering each other in a life-or-death struggle to unify two of wrestling's most prestigious championships. At other times, they've formed a brilliant tag team, one capable of winning any title in the sport.

Are Lawler and Von Erich friends or foes? Teammates or hated enemies? It's hard to tell, and recent events have made things even more chaotic:

- July 26: Lawler takes on Von Erich in a belt vs. belt match in Louisville, Kentucky. Tempers flare as Von Erich is disqualified for using a piledriver—an illegal maneuver in the CWA.
- August 29: Von Erich teams with Lawler in a bloody match against Buddy Landell and Tommy Rich in Memphis. When Rich and Landell injure Von Erich, Lawler vows to drive the rulebreakers out of wrestling.
- September 9: Lawler shocks fans at Dallas' Sportatorium by sucker-punching and horribly bloodying Von Erich before his scheduled match against the World Class champion can begin. Lawler then tries to remove the World Class belt from the waist of his unconscious opponent, but is pre-

& Jerry Lawler:

vented from doing so by referee Bronco Lubich and World Class official Frank Dusek.

• September 12: Only three days after brutally attacking Von Erich, Lawler once again teams with him in a "come as you are" rematch against Landell and Rich. At the end of the bout, Von Erich and Lawler get into a shoving match when referee Jerry Calhoun hands each man the wrong title belt.

What has made this situation even *more* shocking is the sheer ferocity of the Lawler-Von Erich encounters. When this series of matches began, each man was



Von Erich's clawhold is powerful enough to pull Lawler back into the ring. Lawler has been putting his AWA World title up against Von Erich's World Class belt.

Kerry Von Erich and Jerry Lawler have set wrestling on fire with their series of thrilling belt vs. belt encounters. At the same time, they've formed a championship-caliber tag team. With their quest to unify the AWA and World Class belts heating up, their partnership is in serious peril

careful to abide by the rules. As time has gone by, the matches have become increasingly brutal and sadistic. Fans have been shocked at the raw violence displayed by two men who are ranked highly on the "Most Popular" list.

When Von Erich and Lawler team up, however, they wrestle in a manner the fans are more accustomed to. Each looks out for the other like men who have teamed for years.

"I can understand why Jerry's been so on edge," said Von Erich, remarkably understanding considering what Lawler did to him during the Dallas fracas. "Hey, he's a champion, and he wants to stay that way. But we're both trying to do something that has never been done before. Combining these titles would be quite an achievement. He's been using some very rough



Lawler chokes Tommy Rich with a sawed-off baseball bat. When Lawler and Von Erich needed a partner, they turned to each other, even as they often turn against each other.

tactics, but the heat of the moment can make even the best men do some crazy things."

"Anybody who knows me knows I wrestle to win," responded Lawler. "No matter who I'm going against, I go all out at all times. I think Kerry realizes that, and that's why we can team up when the situation calls for it."

Lawler and Von Erich have seen the need to do just that on several occasions, and they've managed to demolish the rugged team of Landell and Rich. Fans in Memphis were excited about the prospect of seeing these two stars become a regular tag team.

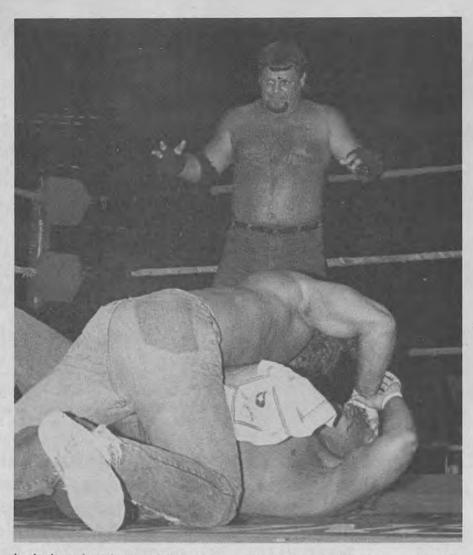
Instead, Lawler and Von Erich looked like anything but teammates when they squared off in a title unification match September 19 in Memphis. Both men were disqualified when they punched referee Jerry Calhoun, which led to a host of wrestlers storming the ring to try to keep peace.

Fearing more incidents of this kind, officials of the AWA, the CWA, and World Class announced that Lawler and Von Erich would meet in the main event of SuperClash III December 13 at the UIC Pavilion in Chicago. According to the rules of this special bout, there *must* be a winner. When this match was announced at a press conference, both men were eager to sign the contract.

With this highly anticipated match looming on the horizon, the possibility of Lawler and Von Erich teaming up again seems remote at best.

"I've always said that Lawler is one of the best wrestlers going," said Von Erich. "He's made a fine partner, but he's got something I want—that AWA World title. Now I've got the chance to merge my belt with his, and I owe it to all my fans in World Class to take it from him."

"Team with Von Erich?" Lawler responded. "Now? I can't even think about that! He thinks the



Lawler is ready to jump into the action as Von Erich scuffles with Rich (above). "The King" piledrives "The Modern-Day Warrior" (below).



World Class belt is the equal of the World title, and it's up to me to make him see the error of his ways. There are more than titles at stake here. It's time to put friendships aside. May the best man win."

The Von Erich-Lawler tag team has the potential of being the best pairing the sport has seen this year. During the times they have teamed up, they've shown they could reach the heights of wrestling if they chose to do so. Instead, they've chosen to fight each other for the chance of adding to their already-impressive legends.

SuperClash III may prove to be the most important event in the careers of both men. The winner will become one of the few doublechampions in wrestling history. The loser will give more than just his helt

· He'll lose one of the best tag team partners he's ever had.



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The telephone wires sizzle every month as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. This is the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to see the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off ... One on One

A YEAR AGO, it looked like he'd never be back in the ring. But now, thanks to the money and influence of AWA manager Diamond Dallas Page, South African madman Col. DeBeers has returned. And he's up to

his old tricks again.

On a recent AWA card in Memphis, The Rock 'n' Roll Express and Sgt. Slaughter wrestled DeBeers, Teijho Khan, and Soldat Ustinov. DeBeers, afraid to square off against Slaughter, walked away from the ring halfway through the match. While the Express and Slaughter were being interviewed after their victory in the bout, Khan and Ustinov dared Rick Morton and Robert Gibson to return to the ring. When they did, DeBeers blindsided Slaughter and piledrived him on the concrete floor. The Express came to Slaughter's rescue, but it was too late: Slaughter had to be carried away on a stretcher and hospitalized with a possible concussion.

This type of behavior should come as no surprise to longtime observers of De-Beers. Last year, DeBeers nearly killed Jimmy Snuka in a racially motivated attack—by piledriving him on a cement floor. Snuka, currently wrestling in Japan, is reportedly on his way back to the AWA to challenge DeBeers.

Slaughter, meanwhile, has vowed revenge against the South African madman for the Memphis attack. The two were scheduled to meet at SuperClash III on December 13 in Chicago.

Although ESPN has prohibited De-Beers from issuing any of his racial slurs on television, Inside Wrestling decided to give the outspoken bigot an opportunity to voice his differences with Slaughter . . . "One on One."

ONE O



"You don't even have the guts to meet me face to face! DeBeers, you're not only a racist, you're a coward!" —Sgt. Slaughter

SGT. SLAUGHTER:

All right, DeBeers, speak now while you still have a chance. I don't know what kind of armies they got down there in South Africa, but if you're any example of what they're turning out, those people are in big trouble.

COL. DeBEERS

Maybe so, but I believe a Colonel outranks a Sergeant even in the States. You're a pathetic example of the terrible condition of the United States armed forces. I could cripple you with one piledriver. Ha! I did! And watch those comments about South Africa, punk. That's a real country. You American slobs can't make that claim, because you don't know how to keep your minorities down. I

pity you.

SS: Don't pity *me*, DeBeers. Just remember one thing: it's American companies and American workers that keep South Africa alive. You know who works for those companies? Great Americans of every size, shape, and color—black and white, red and yellow, all ethnic groups. You're so blinded by prejudice, DeBeers, you have no idea of how things *really* are.

CD: The way you talk, Slaughter, it sounds as if you're almost *proud* that your great American companies are financing my country's government. That's the way I like to hear it. Keep it up, Slaughter.

SS: I'll tell you what I am proud about, DeBeers. I'm proud that

NONE



"You're a pathetic example of the terrible condition of the United States armed forces. I pity you."

—Col. DeBeers

America is the greatest country in the world, that America influences every other country in the world. I'm proud that Americans are capable of working in every corner of the globe. I'm proud that there are American armed forces all over the world, fighting for democracy and equal rights. That's something you wouldn't know about, scum.

CD: Maybe not, but something you wouldn't know about is the undeniable superiority of the white man. You'll always be the pawn of the inferior men of this world, gutless swine like Jimmy Snuka. I've witnessed human inferiority myself. I've seen the poverty among the minorities of my own homeland, and I know

it's not due to the so-called racism of my government, as you American apologists like to say. It's due to the minorities' own stupidity and inability to get off their butts and do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

SS: So now you're Mr. Integrity? If I remember correctly, I was blindsided and piledrived by you. Talk about gutless! You don't even have the guts to meet me face-to-face! You had to wait until my back was turned, then you ran away once Rick [Morton] and Robert [Gibson] came to even things up. If you ask me, DeBeers, you're not only a racist, you're a coward!

CD: Just as one man's racism can be another man's justice, one man's cowardice can be another man's courage. I've met you in the ring, I've stood up to you, and I've beaten you. I've put my beliefs and values on the line, and your flabby Marine biceps were no match for me. If you were in the South African service, you'd be dishonorably discharged for being out of shape and for intellectual barbarism.

SS: And if you were in the United States Marine Corps, working side-by-side with men of all races and colors, you'd realize that there's no difference in men just because of color or race. That's something we learned here about 120 years ago, and we're a better country for it. Don't kid yourself, DeBeers. Your ideas are backward, not superior.

CD: Don't hand me that malarkey about the capabilities of subhumans. I've wrestled your mutant friends, and not one of them has ever shown me any ability, guts, or strength. I fear none of them.

SS: I'm not talking about fear, De-Beers, I'm talking about ability. I'm talking about men, real men like Snuka and Brickhouse Brown, who could take you to the limit any time you want to step into the ring with them. And I'm talking about me. I'm a Marine, DeBeers, and don't you ever forget that. And you know what that makes me?

CD: The few, the proud, the repugnant?

SS: I've torn apart better men than you for putting down the Marines. Remember that, punk, come December 13, when I tear your body apart limb from limb.

CD: You and what army?

SS: I don't need any help you beat you, DeBeers. I actually pity you, DeBeers. I pity you for what's about to happen to you.

CD: And I pity you and the decline of the entire American nation. I will beat you if only to prove the inherent superiority of my beliefs over yours. You're blinded, my friend, blinded to the ways that subhuman mutants have capitalized on the white man's guilt and opulence. You'd be a richer and better nation without any of them.

SS: I've heard enough of your talk. The next time I wanna see you is in the ring, where we can settle matters once and for all. And just remember one thing: I have all of America behind me.

SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 7)

erything he had been fighting for over the past 10 years. He threw away his reputation, he threw away his fan following, and he threw away his very soul.

The fact that Windham was able to score a win over his former mentor, Dusty Rhodes, is the biggest tragedy of all, and proves that there is now no turning back for Barry. At least in my eyes there isn't.

Too bad, Barry, you used to be one of the best.

FELICIA MASTERS Atlanta

UNDERESTIMATED

In the past few months, Larry Zbyszko has gone almost unnoticed by your magazine. Zbyszko is still one of the world's finest wrestlers. He currently holds the Western States title, yet is denied the publicity he deserves. Need I remind the general public that the Western States title is a major NWA title? For this reason, Larry *must* be considered a top challenger to Ric Flair's World title or Barry Windham's U.S. championship.

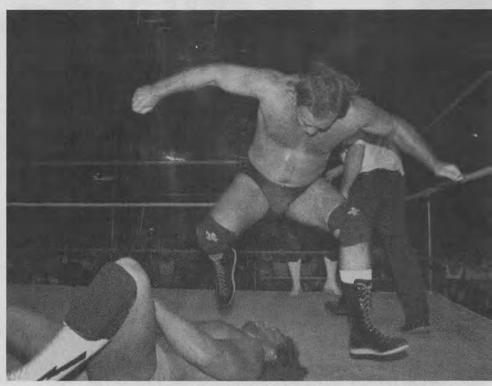
I also noticed that in your November 1988 issue you had Zbyszko ranked 11th in the NWA. I would rank him no lower than fourth. His belt and his 13 years in wrestling certainly warrant this standing. Give him the credit he deserves.

BRIAN WERTH Neenah, WI

MIGHTY GOOD MOVE

I've disliked Hercules Hernandez for a long time. I just thought he was an evil muscleman with no brains. Boy, was I wrong!

I was at a recent WWF card in Indianapolis and I witnessed Hercules' turn to good. Here's what happened: An interview was taking place with Bobby Heenan, Ted DiBiase, Virgil, and Hercules. DiBiase tells Heenan that he needs a slave. Bobby "The Brain" decides to sell Hercules to him. Hercules



Larry Zbyszko stomps on Brad Armstrong. Brian Werth reminds everyone that Zbyszko is still the Western States champion, which makes him a top contender to the World title.



Hercules should be applauded for refusing to allow Bobby Heenan to sell him to Ted DiBiase as a slave, writes Lou Lemberger.

gets mad, saying that he didn't know anything about this. He starts choking Heenan, whereupon the rest of the group jumps Hercules and beats him up.

Not only do I find it appalling that Heenan would try to sell another human being into bondage, I can't believe that DiBiase and friends would (Continued on page 50)

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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 48)

beat up a man solely because he wanted to defend his freedom!

Later in the show, the now-free Hercules was being interviewed by Brother Love. Randy Savage came out to offer his hand to Hercules, saying he has guts for doing what he did. In offering to befriend the abused Hercules, Savage is opening the door for more rulebreakers to turn good.

Once they know that they can wipe clean their slates of evil, I'm sure more rulebreakers will turn good. And that will be a great day for wrestling.

> LOU LEMBERGER Indianapolis

FOR THE FANS

Let me just say something right off the bat: I like interfederation cards. I recently attended a CWA/AWA/ World Class card in Memphis, and it was one of the most exciting cards I've ever attended.

I saw the Samoan Swat Team regain their World Class tag belts from Michael Haves and Steve Cox. I saw the



Robert Gibson headlocks Ronnie Garvin. These two former NWA stars are now wrestling in the AWA, a fact that delights Mitchell Ashley.

continuation of the Col. DeBeers-Sgt. Slaughter feud. I saw Ronnie Garvin take on Robert Gibson. I saw Bad Company, my favorite tag team, beat The Rock 'n' Roll RPMs. The Rock 'n' Roll Express reunited with Slaughter to beat DeBeers, Teijho Khan, and Soldat Ustinov. Tommy Rich beat Jimmy Valiant. Madusa Miceli battled Magnificent Mimi, and later beat Wendi Richter. I even got to see Kerry Von Erich and Jerry Lawler wrestle a belt-against-belt match in the main event.

In other words, I got to see some great action featuring some of the biggest names in the business. I can't wait to see more interfederation cards. I wish there were more. The fans deserve

> MITCHELL ASHLEY Berry Hill, TN

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DRESSING ROOM DOOR

(Continued from page 10)

- just close my eyes and feel the noise, it's something else.
- 15. The crowd reaction when Sting makes his entrance. I like Sting, which makes it even better. I've heard similar crowd reactions only at the World Series and the Stanley Cup finals.
- 16. Watching Ric Flair wrestle before J.J. Dillon interferes or Flair manages to get himself disqualified. Flair obviously has no confidence in himself or else he wouldn't take the easy way out so often.
- 17. The Rougeaus. They're obnoxious as hell, but they certainly know how to incite a crowd. They also know how to wrestle.
- Watching Cheryl Roberts play blackjack in Atlantic City.
- 19. WWF events in Atlantic City.
 Unfortunately, there've been only two: WrestleMania IV and The Slammy Awards.
 But what an excuse to go to A.C.!
- 20. The Jerry Lawler-Kerry Von Erich title vs. title series. We would've been satisified with just one match, and we got so much more.

And now, the dark side. The 20 things I like dislike most about pro wrestling:

- 1. Professional bookies won't take action on it.
- Hulk Hogan. This man keeps on using the fans, and most of them don't even realize it.
 He constantly turns his back on his friends without getting the blame. And he's a poor wrestler.
- 3. Matches not being stopped by an official at ringside when the referee is knocked out. Would a baseball game continue if an umpire were knocked out?

- Managers at ringside. It's an unfair advantage; they simply don't belong there.
- The tragedies: Magnum T.A., Mike Von Erich, Adrian Adonis, Bruiser Brody. I'm tired of bad news, and these incidents were all horrible.
- 6. Brother Love. This man is really annoying.
- Pointing. For some reason, many wrestlers insist on pointing at the camera, pointing at their partner, or simply



Ric Flair locks up with Sting (above). Dave Rosenbaum is impressed with the way Sting excites a crowd.



World Class champ Kerry Von Erich puts the sleeper on AWA champ Jerry Lawler during one of their many title vs. title matches.

- pointing into space. What are they pointing at?
- 8. Non-title matches. What's the point?
- 9. AWA announcer Larry Nelson. Why does he have 15 different ways of holding the microphone?
- 10. NWA announcer David Crockett. Why is he always smiling? Why is it so funny when The Road Warriors threaten to kill an opponent?
- 11. Hacksaw Duggan. Why do the fans love him so much? He beats his opponents over the head with a 2x4, and he's certainly not much of a role model.
- Damien. I really hate snakes. In fact, I don't watch most of Jake's matches, solely because of Damien.
- Before-the-bell attacks. I discussed this last month; I don't understand why they're tolerated.
- 14. The lack of title vs. title matches. A match between Randy Savage and Ric Flair would be the most lucrative in history. But WWF and NWA promoters have too much pride to let it happen.
- Ric Flair talking about his female conquests on TV.
- Scaffold matches. Always a big buildup, always a big bore.
- 17. Shouting. Why must so many wrestlers shout during their interviews?
- Superstar Graham. The worst commentator ever.
- 19. Nassau Coliseum cards.
- 20. The Ultimate Warrior. No wonder he attacked Honky Tonk before the bell. If the match had lasted more than a minute, the Warrior would've been exhausted.

That about says it all.

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December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

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February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala. April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Ti-

ger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans,
Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

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JANUARY 1985

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs. February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff. March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka. May 1985/Stories include: Warriors. Backlund, Santana, Rich.

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August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express. October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs. December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

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May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Lugar, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A. July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.

August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Bulldogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan. September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.



OCTOBER 1986

October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham. November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich. December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.

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Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase. **June 1988/**Stories include: Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita, Zenk.

July 1988/Stories include: Fantastics, Hogan, Windham, McMahon, Rich. August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Windham-Luger split, Demolition,

Lawler, Ellering.

September 1988/Stories include: Duggan vs. Andre, Hogan, Windham.

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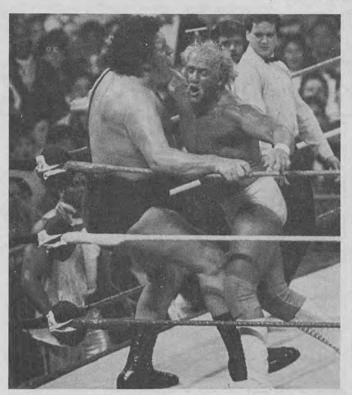
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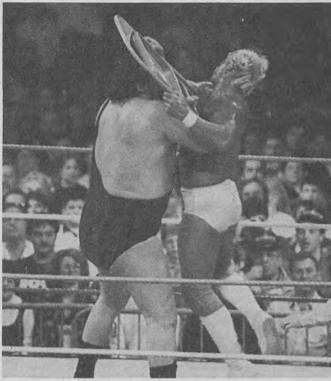
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MEGACONFUSION

(Continued from page 33)





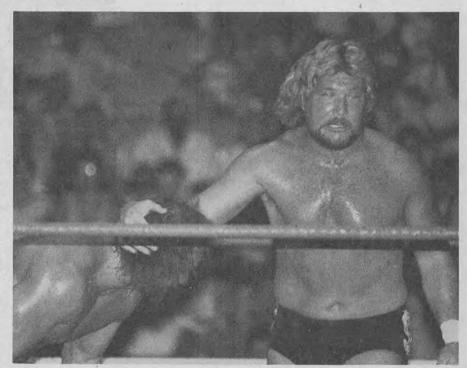
Hogan levels Andre the Giant with a vicious clothesline (above left) and smashes him with a chair (above right); Andre might turn good in 1989. DiBiase has Savage at a disadvantage (below). Don't be surprised if Savage goes back to his old rulebreaking ways!

giant loved by kids and admired by adults. And he had many friends, including—after a brief feud—Hulk Hogan.

Now Andre is hated by the fans. He sold his soul to Ted DiBiase and got little in return. He's managed by Bobby Heenan—a man he once despised. And as Andre's career draws to a sad close, he's *still* without the World title he so desires. And without friends. Andre the Giant is a very unhappy man.

Andre's seen the way DiBiase and Heenan do things. Andre has always been known as a man who is willing to fight for what he wants; DiBiase and Heenan are always taking shortcuts. He was disgusted by their behavior toward Elizabeth at SummerSlam. Andre knows how to have a good time, but he also knows how to do his job.

He's been on the dark side for too long. By WrestleMania V, Andre the Giant will be back in our



hearts. And there'll be a smile on his face—a *real* smile, not the devious one he so often displays now.

Randy Savage. The past year was a fluke. Don't be fooled: the "Macho Man" is a vicious crimi-

nal with no regard for human life. His only concern is himself. Even his supposed love for Elizabeth is a fraud. He keeps her on a chain like an animal and won't let any other man go near her. Didn't everybody see the look on Savage's

face when Hogan hugged Elizabeth after the SummerSlam main event?

He nearly killed Rick Steamboat with the timekeeper's bell two years ago, and then tried to do it again at WrestleMania III. And Steamboat isn't the only one. Savage tried to maim George "The Animal" Steele for getting too close to his manager.

Now Hogan is getting too close to Elizabeth. Savage feels threatened, and when that happens he's likely to react violently. It's only a matter of time: soon, you'll be wondering how you ever cheered this uncontrollable madman.

Hulk Hogan. Let's face it: is there anything Hogan could do that would make you hate him? He'd probably have to attack a young fan or hit Elizabeth, and that isn't going to happen.

Not that Hogan is such a nice guy. The bad Hogan was clearly evident during the early 1980s. But back then, Hogan wasn't receiving millions of dollars in endorsements. His face wasn't on billboards and advertisements across the country. People weren't wearing Hulk Hogan tearaway T-shirts and eating Hulk Hogan ice cream bars.

It's all a matter of practicality. Hogan would never do anything to hurt his precious image. As a rulebreaker, Hogan would be worthless. Nobody would wear his T-shirts or buy his dolls, and advertisers would avoid him like a plague. Madison Avenue doesn't want a hated man endorsing its products.

Hogan knows this. And he also knows that he doesn't have to become a rulebreaker to get a shot at Savage's title. If he waits long enough, Savage will become a rulebreaker.

There'll be a Hogan-Savage main event at WrestleMania V.

And you'll be rooting for Hogan.

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THE INSIDER

(Continued from page 16)

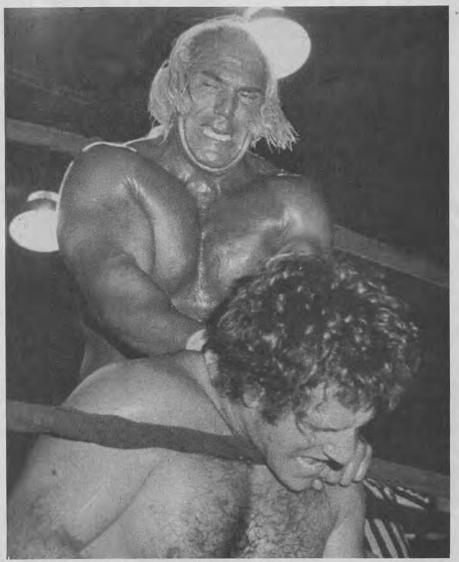
spect fans, promoters, colleagues, and the media once had for him. Piper wanted fans to realize he deserved their respect despite his rulebreaking past. Both men succeeded. This editor must disagree: Roddy Piper couldn't care less what anyone thought of him. But thanks anyway, Dwayne.

Writing from Stoughton, Massachusetts, Vin Carolan selects a lighthearted moment as his greatest ever: The greatest moment was when the "real" Nikita Koloff gave a long deserved Russian sickle to that biased, illiterate idiot, David Crockett, during a televised interview. If ever a moment bore

repeating again and again ...

The winning entry was chosen partly because of Romeyn E. Tobin's acknowledgment of the difficulty involved in selecting the greatest moment in wrestling history.

It's almost impossible to choose a single greatest moment from a sport that's had so many. One outstanding event comes to mind. The date was April 30, 1977, and the place was the Baltimore Civic Center. The event, of course, was the WWF championship victory of Superstar Billy Graham over the legendary Bruno Sammartino. This would be the sixth WWF title



Superstar Graham chokes Bruno Sammartino against the ropes on his way to winning the WWF title. The winner of Eddie Ellner's contest called this the most significant win ever.

change, and perhaps the most important.

Graham's win was very significant for several reasons. There's no doubt that Graham's victory over Sammartino all but ended the career of "The Living Legend." Graham was able to succeed where countless others had failed. Beating Bruno was no easy task. Graham himself had fallen short many previous campaigns.

Graham knew that any prematch psychology of which he was so talented would be ineffective against a veteran like Sammartino, so he relied on his talents inside the ring-not a poor choice considering his vast repertoire of skills and tricks. As expected, Graham took a severe beating. But after a whirlwind of brilliantly executed (and a few of them quite questionable) maneuvers, Graham took the victory and the title.

Though Sammartino challenged Graham to a series of rematches, including a violent encounter in a steel cage, he was unable to win his title back. The crafty champ outsmarted Bruno time after time.

In addition to heralding the beginning of a new era, Graham's triumph was important because of the changes the new champion would soon instill in the sport. In matters of conditioning and fashion, Graham was years ahead of his time. I have yet to see a pair of arms (Hulk Hogan's included) as powerful as Graham's were in his prime. An interview session with Graham was a work of art. Additionally, men like Lex Luger, Sting, Ultimate Warrior, and The Road Warriors were inspired by the Superstar.

Graham was a great wrestler and remains an inspiration to all who meet him. Don't ever forget the great moment that elevated him to excellence. It marked the end of a legend, but the start of something truly great.

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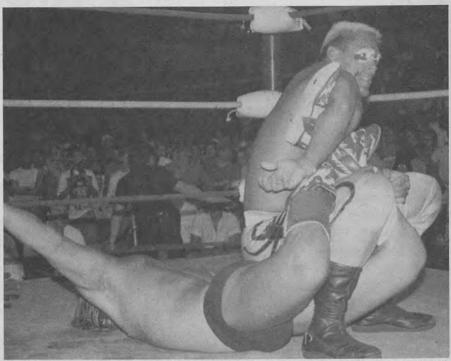
STING VS. WINDHAM

(Continued from page 37)

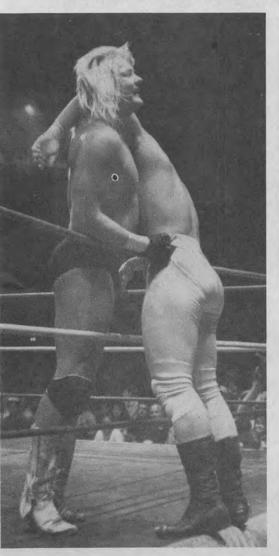
of which *used* to be Windham—for advice.

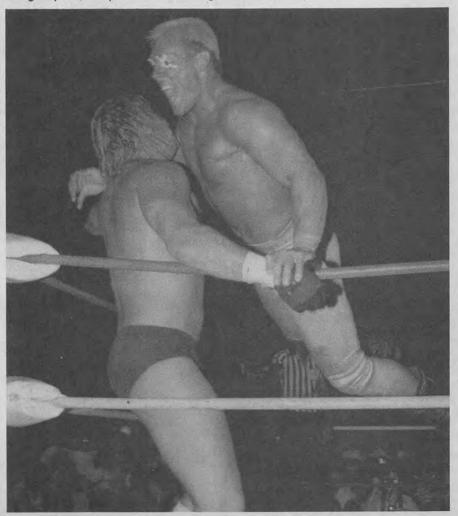
Size. Sting, a solid 260-pounder, has had a great deal of trouble getting Windham's lanky 6'5", 263-pound frame off the mat with the same maneuvers that have worked well against most other opponents. "I keep forgetting he's such a humongous dude," Sting said after a recent bout. "Most guys crumble to the canvas after I give 'em the splash in the corner, but Windham is just so damn big he can almost shrug it off."

The fans. Sting thrives on hearing the cheers of the fans, but Windham uses those same cheers to psych himself up. "I love it when they go crazy for Sting when I'm wrestling him,"



Windham desperately reaches for the ropes to break Sting's scorpion leglock (above), and prepares to suplex Sting back into the ring (left). Sting unloads on Windham with the "Stinger splash," a quick and devastating maneuver (below).





laughed Windham. "They should be cheering *me*, and I use my anger as a weapon. I'm very hard to stop when I get riled up." Sting has to understand the psychological forces at work in the fans' cheers—and use them to his own advantage.

Management. Windham can depend on J.J. Dillon to watch his back when he gets in trouble. U.S. title matches often end up with Windham, Dillon, and even Flair ganging up on Sting, who then must fight just to survive. Sting ought to think about getting a manager of his own to counter such interference—or find another way to neutralize Dillon and his henchmen.

Science. Although he now is a rulebreaker, Windham is a master of virtually every hold known to man. The champion is able to unleash a brilliant maneuver in the middle of a brawl, something Sting has yet to learn how to do.

Emotion. Sting appears highly susceptible to mood swings during matches. Windham is one of the coolest competitors in the game, able to keep his wits about him even when the going gets rugged. Consistency counts for a lot in wrestling!

Stamina. While both of these men are superb physical specimens, Windham could wrestle for hours if the situation demanded it—and has proven it by going to a host of time-limit draws during his career. Sting polishes off most opponents in just a few minutes, and his staying power is largely unproven.

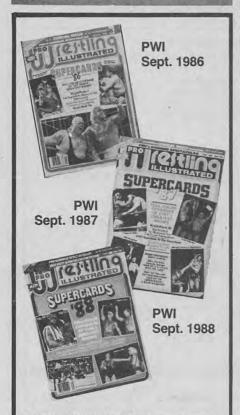
The officials. When Sting wrestles, his only goal is to demolish Windham. The champion, on the other hand, is usually working on the referee, trying to gain an advantage in any way possible. Windham has established himself as one of the best referee-baiters in the sport, and has outsmarted Sting this way on many occasions.

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ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from page 18)



The Midnight Express have both the World and U.S. tag belts, the first tag team in NWA history to achieve that pinnacle of success. They were never expected to challenge Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson for the World belts, but Cornette's bold gamble paid off.

changes—and returned them. The cash went to the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation; nothing like a good deed before lunch to rejuvenate the soul.

At precisely 7:00 p.m., a stretch limousine pulled up in front of my apartment. Punctuality is a Cornette trademark, so I dawdled for several minutes, hoping to incite Mama Cornette's infamous temper.

"Running late are we, darling?" Mama said through clenched teeth as I entered the car at 7:15.

"What's the hurry?" I asked in my best sing-song voice. "All anyone does in this city is rush, rush, rush." The Cornette fortune didn't evolve from taking it easy; on Wall Street, Mama Cornette is legendary for her 20-hour work days. Each moment of her day is strictly accounted for. Which is

why the night's dinner invitation appeared inexplicable.

But the Cornettes' generosity is directly proportional to their needs. They invited me out because they wanted something. Until I discovered what it was they needed, they would play according to my rules. I would set the tone.

At the restaurant, I took an insufferably long time to order and engaged our waiter in a 15-minute conversation on the choice of wine. Cornette looked nervously at his mother, who impatiently stared at her watch.

"So, what's up?" I finally asked. "Why the dinner? Why the gowns? The limousine? I know you both too well to think I'm here sharing this \$300 bottle of wine because you miss me. What do you need?"

"Does this day have any significance to you, Liz?" Jim Cornette asked.

"Aside from it being one of the longest days I've ever spent, no, not particularly," I answered. "Should it?"

"Tomorrow, my Midnight Express fight for the NWA World tag team title," Cornette replied, not telling me anything I didn't already know.

"Yes, Jimmy," I said. "The point?"

Cornette glared at his mother, who turned away in hostile embarrassment. I didn't know what was going on. "What were you doing on February 1, 1986?" Cornette asked. "Do you remember where you were?"

The conversation had gotten strange. "I was outside looking for my shadow," I deadpanned.

"No," Cornette corrected. "You were in Atlanta, dining at Bugatti with Mother and myself." I waited for Cornette to elaborate. "The next night, Dennis Condrey and Bobby Eaton defeated The Rock n' Roll Express for the NWA World tag team title." I was slow in getting the point, so Mama Cornette helped.

"My brilliant son is superstitious," she said angrily. "He's dragged us here tonight to recreate the last time he won the belts." Mama Cornette glanced her sadly into vichyssoise. "Where have I gone wrong?"

"But the Express are a different team now than they were in '86," I argued. "And Blanchard and Anderson have little in common with Morton and Gibson."

"Don't even bother," Mama said. "I told him all the good luck in the world won't pin Blanchard. but he won't listen to reason."

Two nights later, following the Express' title victory, a bouquet of flowers arrived at my apartment. Dear Liz, the card read, thanks so very much for joining us for dinner.

ctory Sports

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FALL 1985/Color pinup: Steve Keirn & Stan Lane. Stories include: Albano & Hogan, DiBiase. Warriors, Garvin.

WINTER 1985/Color pinup: Barry Windham. Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, Kerry, R&R Express, Steamboat, Thesz.

SPRING 1986/Color pinup: The Road Warriors. Stories include: Martel, Savage vs. Poffo, Hogan, Santana, Steamboat.

SUMMER 1986/Color pinup: Rock 'n' Roll Express & Magnum T.A. Stories include: Flair, Warriors, JYD, Magnum, Williams.

FALL 1986/Color pinup: Randy Savage. Stories include: R&R Express, Missy, Roberts, Windham, Luger, Rhodes.

WINTER 1986/Color pinup: Hulk Hogan. Stories include: Flair, Freebirds, Hogan, Andre. Watts, Haynes, Fantastics.

SPRING 1987/Color pinup: The Four Horsemen. Stories include: Ventura, T.A., Bulldogs, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

SUMMER 1987/Color pinup: Road Warriors workout. Stories include: Hogan-Andre, Rockers, Koloff, Warriors, Hall-Luger.

FALL 1987/Color pinup: Dark Journey. Stories include: Albano, Hogan, T.A., Lane, Hyatt, Hennig, Luger.

WINTER 1987/Color pinup: Jesse Ventura. Stories include: Kerry, Rhodes, Hogan, Flair, Honky Tonk, DiBiase.

SPRING 1988/Color pinup: Elizabeth. Stories include: Hennig, Koloff, Savage, Strike Force, Warriors, Andre-Hogan.

SUMMER 1988/Color pinup: Missy Hyatt. Stories include: Rock 'n' Roll Express, Hogan, Sting, Luger, Owen Hart, Animal.

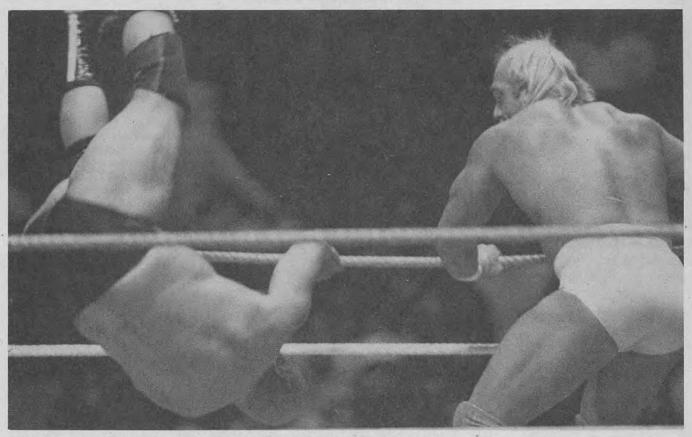
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HULK HOGAN

(Continued from page 35)



Hogan flips Brown back into the ring (above). Brown tries on "The Hulkster's" helmet for size (below), but Hogan would seize it back and use it as a weapon against his foe.



handing out suspensions. More often than not, officials will look the other way rather than suspend a wrestler who brings fans to the arena.

In the Hogan case, a ban is clearly in order.

You officials ought to know as well as anybody that a ban is not unprecedented in the WWF. In 1977, Ken Patera, then the most vicious of rulebreakers, was banned for nearly crippling an opponent with his swinging neckbreaker. After serving several weeks of the suspension, Patera paid a \$5,000 fine and was allowed to return.

But Hogan is not a hated rulebreaker, and that makes suspending him much more difficult. The fans want to see Hogan wrestle, and they want to see him win. Taking away his helmet might endanger his ability to do both.

It's a touchy situation. Rarely has a man who breaks the rules so blatantly been so enormously popular. But for WWF fans, Hogan can do

no wrong. In a recent match against Bad News Brown, for example, the crowd roared its approval as Hogan first knocked out Brown with the helmet, then pinned him. Any other wrestler would have been instantly disqualified, but Hogan is an exception.

There's every reason to believe that Hogan, knowing you will never punish him, will continue to use his helmet whenever the referee's back is turned. This creates an unusual situation: a fan favorite who is the most blatant rulebreaker in the sport. But as long as Hogan stays popular (there's little chance of that changing in the future), and as long as you officials refuse to take a stand for justice (there's little chance of this happening, either). Hogan will have the best of both worlds.

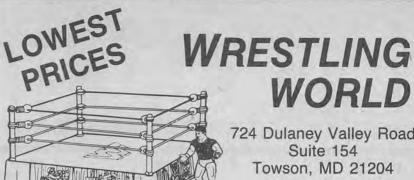
If you find yourselves unable to suspend Hogan, you should at least take a secondary stand and ban the helmet. Hogan's helmet can fall into the hands of his opponents, creating an even more dangerous situation. On one notable occasion, the helmet was intercepted by Virgil, who aimed the helmet's fist at the restrained "Hulkster." Hogan ducked and the helmet punched Ted DiBiase instead. The foreign object had decided vet another match.

No referee is able to witness every incident of rulebreaking. That's an unfortunate ring reality. When a referee's back is turned, even a fan favorite will resort to kicking, punching-or grabbing for his motorcycle helmet.

It's time, WWF officials, for you to step in. Reviewing Hogan's matches is a good first step. Banning the helmet is the least you can

But if Hogan continues his tendency toward such extreme rulebreaking, it may require some guts on your part: a total ban of Hulk Hogan would be the logical next step.

That's why you must act now! Ban the helmet-before it's too late.



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SIGNATURE

INSIDE WRESTLING'S

TOP 15

- 1-RANDY SAVAGE WWF World champion
- RIC FLAIR NWA World champion
- -JERRY LAWLER AWA World chamion

NWA

- 1-RIC FLAIR 243, Minneapolis, MN
- BARRY WINDHAM 263, Sweetwater, TX
- **LEX LUGER** 268, Chicago, IL

AWA

- 1—JERRY LAWLER 234, Memphis, TN
- -RONNIE GARVIN 231, Montreal, Quebec
- KERRY VON ERICH 260, Denton, TX

WWF

- **-RANDY SAVAGE** 245, Sarasota, FL
- **ULTIMATE WARRIOR** 280, Queens, NY
- ANDRE THE GIANT 497, Grenoble, France

MOST POPULAR

- 1-HULK HOGAN Last month: No. 1 Most Popular
- RANDY SAVAGE Last month: No. 2 Most Popular
- STING Last month: No. 4 Most Popular

Last month: No. 1 Most Hated

Last month: No. 2 Most Hated

Last month: No. 3 Most Hated

MOST HATED

1-ANDRE THE GIANT

Last month: No. 6 Most Popular **DUSTY RHODES**

-LEX LUGER

No. 2 contender: NWA title

No. 3 contender: WWF title

No. 3 contender: NWA title

260, Venice Beach, CA

STEVE WILLIAMS

220. Robbinsdale, MN

WAHOO McDANIEL

SOLDAT USTINOV

302, Venice Beach, CA

BAD NEWS BROWN

THE HONKY TONK MAN

Last month: No. 3 Most Popular

265, Moscow, Russia

MANNY FERNANDEZ

DUSTY RHODES

302, Austin, TX

AL PEREZ

265, Norman, OK

238, Tampa, FL

GREG GAGNE

280, Midland, TX

245, El Paso, TX

—TED DIBIASE

247, Omaha, NE

HULK HOGAN

255, Memphis, TN

280, New York, NY

LEX LUGER

KERRY VON ERICH

World Class champion

TED DIBIASE

STING

4-STING

Last month: No. 5 Most Popular **ULTIMATE WARRIOR**

HACKSAW DUGGAN

- Last month: No. 7 Most Popular
- **BARRY WINDHAM** Last month: No. 4 Most Hated
- RICK RUDE Last month: No. 5 Most Hated
- THE HONKY TONK MAN Last month: No. 7 Most Hated
- 7-TOMMY RICH Last month: No. 13 Most Hated

- 8-BARRY WINDHAM U.S. heavyweight champion
- **HULK HOGAN** No. 4 contender: WWF title
- **ULTIMATE WARRIOR** WWF Intercontinental champion
- RONNIE GARVIN AWA International TV champion
- **NIKITA KOLOFF** 275, Moscow, Russia
- MIKE ROTUNDO 245, Syracuse, NY
- RICK STEINER 248. Detroit, MI
- 11—KEVIN SULLIVAN 252, Boston, MA
- **COL. DEBEERS** 248, Cape Town, South Africa
- MANDO GUERRERO 225, Mexico City, Mexico
- 10-TEUHO KHAN 265, Singapore
- SGT. SLAUGHTER 310, Parris Island, SC
 - KING HAKU 270, Tonga
- BRUTUS BEEFCAKE 273, San Francisco, CA
- JAKE ROBERTS 246, Stone Mountain, GA
- RICK RUDE 246, Robbinsdale, MN
 - -JERRY LAWLER Last month: No. 8 Most Popular
- **JAKE ROBERTS**
- Last month: No. 9 Most Popular KERRY VON ERICH
- Last month: No. 10 Most Popular
- 11-NIKITA KOLOFF Last month: unrated
 - **KEVIN SULLIVAN** Last month: No. 9 Most Hated
- **RON BASS** Last month: unrated
- **RONNIE GARVIN** Last month: unrated
- -KAMALA Last month: unrated

- 12-THE HONKY TONK MAN No. 1 contender: WWF I-C title
- JAKE ROBERTS No. 3 contender: WWF I-C title
- **ICEMAN PARSONS** World Class Texas champion
- 15-JOHNNY SMITH British Commonwealth champion
- BAM BAM BIGELOW 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- **RON SIMMONS** 260, Perry, GA
- 14-IVAN KOLOFF 249, Moscow, Russia
- LARRY ZBYSZKO 248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 12-TOMMY RICH 248, Hendersonville, TN
- HECTOR GUERRERO 218, Mexico City, Mexico
- 14-ROBERT GIBSON 225, Pensacola, FL
- 15-JIMMY VALIANT
- 251, New York, NY
- 12—HACKSAW DUGGAN 280, Glens Falls, NY
- DINO BRAVO 246, Montreal, Quebec
- **RON BASS** 285, Pampa, TX
- **BIG BOSSMAN**
- 348, Louisville, KY
- 12-TOM PRICHARD Last month: unrated
- -WAHOO McDANIEL Last month: unrated
- 14-AUSTIN IDOL Last month: No. 12 Most Popular
 - STEVE DISALVO
 - Last month: No. 15 Most Popular
- 12-DINO BRAVO Last month: unrated
- MANNY FERNANDEZ Last month: No. 14 Most Hated
- -COL. DEBEERS Last month: unrated
- -MAKHAN SINGH Last month: No. 15 Most Hated

TAG TEAMS

-RIC FLAIR

TED DIBIASE

- 1—THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS NWA World tag team champions
- -DEMOLITION WWF World tag team champions
- **3—THE ROAD WARRIORS** No. 1 contenders: NWA World tag team title
- -PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND AWA World tag team champions
- -THE FANTASTICS No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title
- 6—THE WARLORD & THE BARBARIAN No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag team title
- THE HART FOUNDATION No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag team title
- THE ROUGEAU BROTHERS No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag team title 9—THE BRITISH BULLDOGS
- No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag team title THE SAMOAN SWAT TEAM World Class & Texas tag team champions
- 11-JERRY MORROW & CUBAN ASSASSIN Stampede International tag team champions
- -RICKY RICE & JOHN PAUL No. 1 contenders: AWA World tag team title
- THE SHEEPHERDERS No. 3 contenders: NWA World tag team title
- MICHAEL HAYES & STEVE COX No. 1 contenders: World Class tag team title
- 15-JERRY STUBBS & TONY ANTHONY Continental tag team champions

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestier . . . "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices ... Championships marked with asterisks on the "Roll Call of Champions" indicate title changes that have taken place since our previous issue . . . The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place,

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-CALIFORNIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING CHAMPION: CHAVO GUERRERO

ALL-CALIFORNIA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: PETER MAIVIA JR. & MANDO GUERRERO (September 24, 1988; from the Lords of Discipline; Victorville, CA)

ALL-JAPAN ASIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SHINICHI NAKANO & SHUNJI CAKANO (September 9, 1988; from Takashi Kamada & Sampson Fuyuki; Chiba, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: JUMBO TSURUTA

(April 14, 1988; from Bruiser Brody; Sendai, Japan)
ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

JUMBO TSURUTA & YOSHIAKI YATSU
(July 31, 1988; from Stan Hansen & Terry Gordy; Hakodate, Japan)
ALL-JAPAN JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MASANOBU FUCHI
(January 3, 1987; from Kuniaki Kobayashi; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: STAN HANSEN

(July 27, 1988; from Genichiro Tenryu; Nagano, Japan)
ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPION: TITLE HELD UP

(most recently held by Chigusa Nagoyo)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S CHAMPION: MIKA KOMATSU
(July 10, 1988; from Yumi Ogura; Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

MIKA KOMATSU & YUMI OGURA (August 25, 1988; from Yumiko Hotta & Mitsuko Nishiwaki; Kawasaki, Japan)

AWA TV CHAMPION: RON GARVIN (September 17, 1988; from Greg Gagne; Nashville, TN)

AWA WORLD WOMEN'S CHAMPION: MADUSA MICELI (December 27, 1987; tournament final over Candi Divine; Las Vegas, NV)

AWA WORLD CHAMPION: JERRY LAWLER
(May 9, 1988; from Curt Hennig; Memphis, TN)

AWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND
(March 19, 1988; from The Midnight Rockers; Las Vegas, NV)

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH CHAMPION: JOHNNY SMITH
(June 24, 1988; from Chris Benoit; Calgary, Alberta)

CENTRAL STATES CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by D.J. Pete CENTRAL STATES TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Rick Patterson & Stevie Ray)

CONTINENTAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JERRY STUBBS & TONY ANTHONY

CONTINENTAL U.S. JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: KEN WAYNE (August 8, 1988; from Dan Davis; Birmir

CWA CHAMPION: PHIL HICKERSON

CWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE RPMs
(August 15, 1988; from Scott Steiner & Billy Travis; Memphis, TN) FLORIDA CHAMPION: RICK STEINER

FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING CHAMPION: DICK SLATER (September 13, 1988; from Dan Spivey; Tampa, FL) FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

JOHNNY ACE & THE TERMINATOR (September 20, 1988; from Mike Graham & Steve Keirn; Tampa, FL)

IWGP CHAMPION: TATSUMI FUJINAMI

(June 24, 1988; over Riki Choshu; Osaka, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: MASA SAITO & RIKI CHOSHU
(June 10, 1988; from Tatsumi Fujinami & Kengo Kimura; Hiroshima, Japan)

IWGP JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHIRO KOSHINAKA (June 24, 1988; from Owen Hart; Osaka, Japan)

NWA SIX-MAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: DUSTY RHODES & THE ROAD WARRIORS Uuly 9, 1988; over Ric Flair, Tully Blanchard, & Am Anderson; Chic NWA TV CHAMPION: MIKE ROTUNDO (January 26, 1988; from Nikita Koloff; Raleigh, NC) NWA WORLD CHAMPION: RIC FLAIR (November 26, 1987; from Popula Cantin, Chicago)

NWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS (September 10, 1988; from Am Anderson & Tully Blanchard; Philadelphia) NATIONAL WRESTLING FEDERATION CHAMPION: JULES STRONGBOW PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAMPION: SCOTT PETERSON

(August 5, 1988; from The Grappler; Eugene, OR)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STEVE DOLL & SCOTT PETERSON
(September 20, 1988; from Buddy Rose & The Avalanche; Portland, OR)

PWF CHAMPION: STAN HANSEN

(July 27, 1988; from Genichiro Tenryu; Nagano, Japan)

PWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JUMBO TSURUTA & YOSHIAKI YATSU
(August 30, 1988; from Genichiro Tenryu & Ashura Hara; Osaka, Japan)

STAMPEDE NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: MAKHAN SINGH lay 6. 1988: from Owen Hart; Calgary, Albe

STAMPEDE INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JERRY MORROW & THE CUBAN ASSASSIN (July 22, 1988; from Bruce Hart & Brian Pillman; Calgary, Alberta)

U.S. CHAMPION: BARRY WINDHAM (May 13, 1988; tournament final over Nikita Koloff; Houston)
U.S. TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS

WESTERN STATES CHAMPION: LARRY ZBYSZKO

(January 24, 1988; from Barry Windham; Uniondale, WORLD CLASS CHAMPION: KERRY VON ERICH

(May 8, 1988; from Iceman Parsons; Irving, TX)
WORLD CLASS LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: ERIC EMBRY

WORLD CLASS SIX-MAN CHAMPIONS:

KERRY VON ERICH, KEVIN VON ERICH, & MICHAEL HAYES
(July 8, 1988; from Iceman Parsons, Kamala, & Buddy Roberts; Dallas)

* WORLD CLASS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE SAMOAN SWAT TEAM
(September 19, 1988; from Michael Hayes & Steve Cox; Memphis, TN)

WORLD CLASS TEXAS CHAMPION: ICEMAN PARSONS
(August 5, 1988; from Kerry Von Erich; substituting for Kevin Von Erich; Dallas)

* WORLD CLASS TEXAS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE SAMOAN SWAT TEAM (September 12, 1988; from Jimmy Jack Funk & John Tatum; Ft. Worth, TX)
WORLD PACIFIC CHAMPION: SUPERFLY TUI

WORLD PACIFIC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: MIGHTY MILO & TEU (May 17, 1988; from Farmer Boy Ipo & Leroy Brown; Honolulu) WORLD WRESTLING ALLIANCE CHAMPION: MIKE GEORGE

(March 17, 1988; from Masa Chono; Kansas City, KS)

* WWC CARIBBEAN CHAMPION: TNT

WWC CARIBBEAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BOBBY JAGGERS & DAN KROFFAT

WWC JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: THE INVADER III

(April 23, 1988; from Tony Falk; Guaynabo, Puerto Rico)
WWC NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER

WWC PUERTO RICAN CHAMPION: RICKY SANTANA (August 6, 1988; from Super Black Ninja; San Juan, Puerto Rico) WWC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRAD & BART BATTEN

(August 6, 1988; from Kendo Nagasaki & Mr. Pogo; San Juan, Puerto Rico)
WWC UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

WWC WOMEN'S CHAMPION: WENDI RICHTER
(July 28, 1987; from Monster Ripper; Trinidad, West Indies)
WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

(August 29, 1988; from The Honky Tonk Man; New York)
WWF WORLD CHAMPION: RANDY SAVAGE

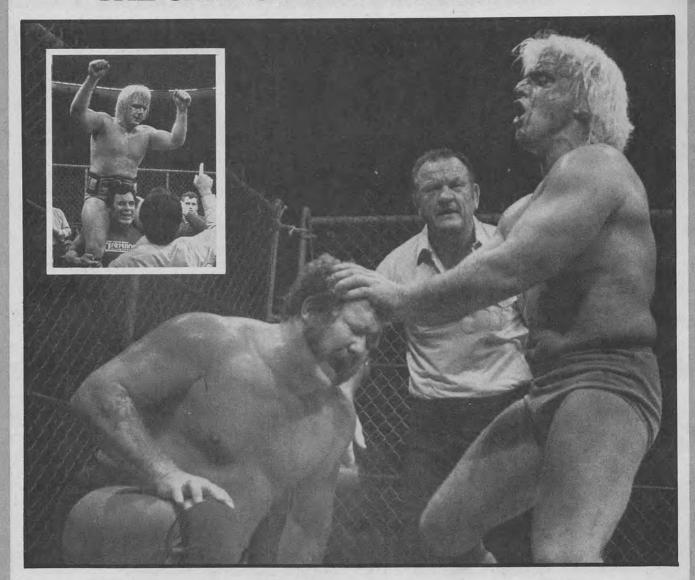
ch 27, 1988; tournament final over Ted DiBiase; Atlantic City, NJ) WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: DEMOLITION (March 27, 1988; from Rick Martel & Tito Santana; Atlantic City, NJ)

WWF WOMEN'S CHAMPION: SHERRI MARTEL (July 24, 1987; from The Fabulous Moolah; Ho

WWF WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LELANI KAI & JUDY MARTIN (June 8, 1988; from The Jumping Bomb Angels; Omiya City, Japan

Blast From The Past This Month In Wrestling History

"THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD"



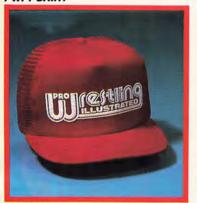
RIC FLAIR vs. HARLEY RACE November 24, 1983

The greatest NWA champion of the '70s, Harley Race, was defeated by the greatest NWA champion of the '80s, Ric Flair, in this classic battle in Greensboro, North Carolina. Former champion Gene Kiniski served as the referee for this bout, which was historic for two major reasons: It marked the end of Race's seventh (and final) title reign, and it was the first time the coveted NWA championship had changed hands in a steel cage match.

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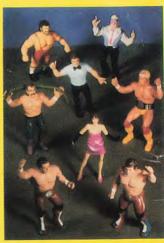


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